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WEATHER

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The pursuit over, a people's princess comes home

**Michael Streeter,
John Lichfield
and Mary Braid**

A sombre Prince of Wales brought the body of his ex-wife, Diana, home to Britain last night as the nation struggled to come to terms with the shock and suddenness of her violent death.

In part, the mood was one of simple grief at the loss of a 36-year-old woman in her prime, a "People's Princess" who had become the most famous woman in the world, struck down by the hideous banality of a car crash.

But there was also a growing sense of anger at the manner of her death – killed in a high-speed chase escaping a pack of paparazzi photographers in Paris – prompting claims that actions of the media had stood on their hands. The tragedy also led to calls for the introduction of tough new privacy laws.

Seven photographers were last night being questioned by police in Paris over their part in the motorcycle pursuit of Diana and her close friend, Dodi Fayed, son of Harrods owner Mohamed al-Fayed, who was also killed in crash.

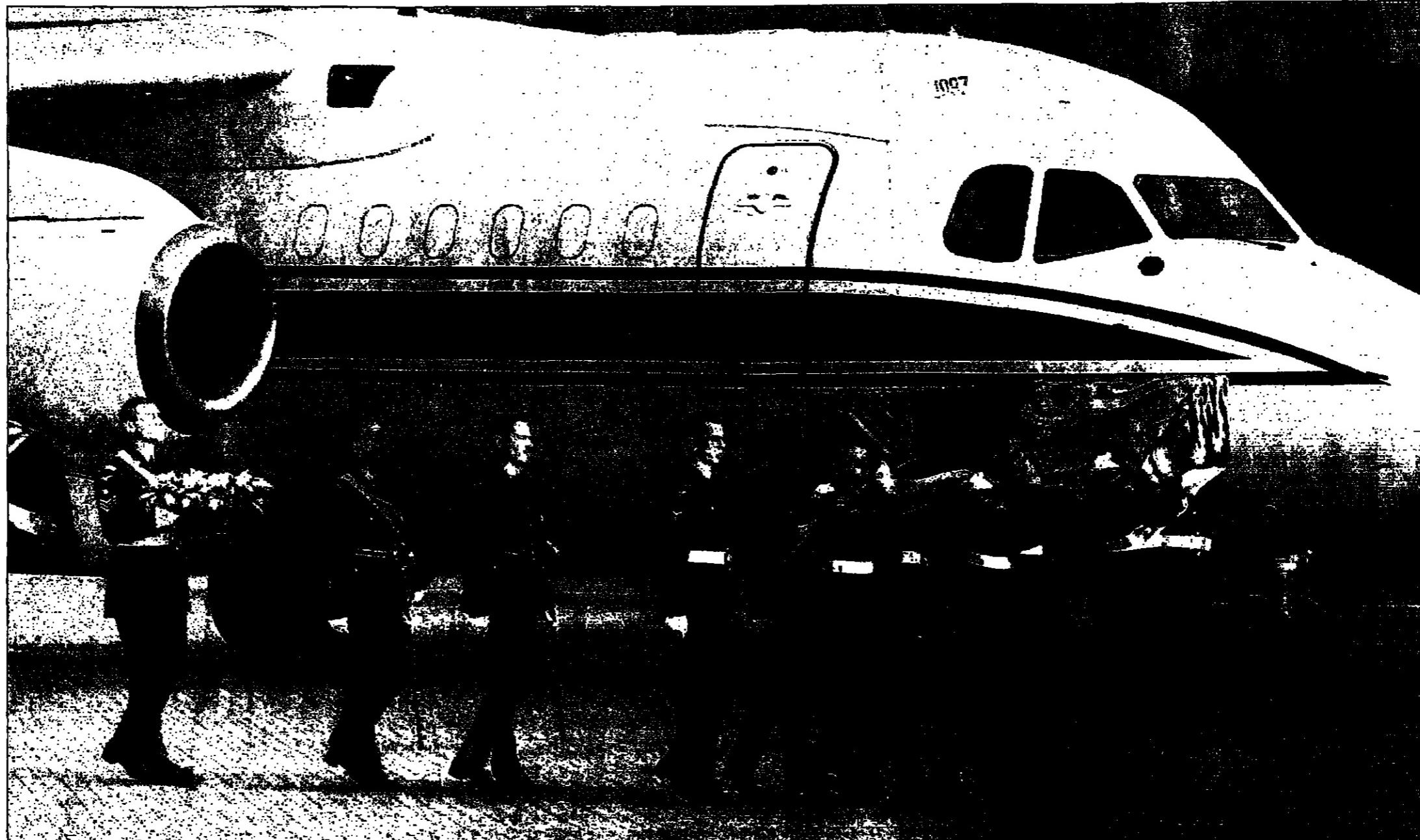
French police sources last night said that charges of dangerous driving and failing to take action to prevent the loss of life could be brought against some of the photographers. The sources said that some of the pack were taking pictures within seconds of the crash. Mr Fayed announced last night that he intended to bring a law suit against the photographers involved and their employers.

The angry mood was summed up most graphically by Diana's brother, Earl Spencer at his home in South Africa, who said every owner or editor who had paid for intrusive photographs of his sister had "blood on their hands". He said: "I always believed the press would kill her in the end. But not even I could believe they would take such a direct hand in her death as seems to be the case."

On his tour of the Far East, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, spoke about the need to raise serious questions about "aggressive intrusion into her privacy".

The calls were given further ammunition by reports that one news magazine in the United States has offered photographs of the Paris crash and its aftermath for around \$1m (£588,000). One photographer was attacked by witnesses.

Though a growing number of MPs and former ministers were pushing hard for tougher laws or a fresh inquiry into privacy legislation, senior sources were pointing out that France's tough privacy laws had not prevented



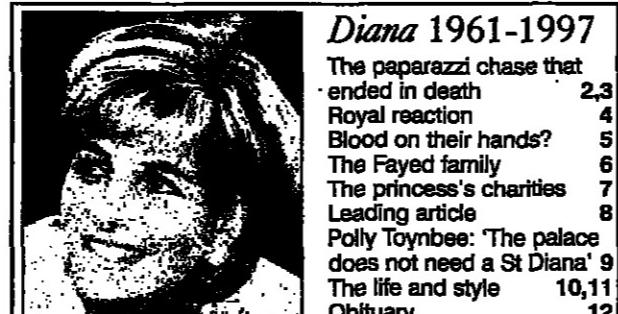
An honour guard carries the coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales, from an aircraft of the Royal Flight which had brought it from Paris to Northolt Airport, near London, accompanied by her sisters, Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes, and the Prince of Wales, who afterwards returned to Balmoral Castle.
Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

the tragedy, and that the prospect of fresh British legislation was remote.

Outside Diana's London home, Kensington Palace, photographers were forced to seek police protection because of a hostile reaction from onlookers who had come to mourn her.

The scenes contrasted with the quiet dignity of Prince Charles and Diana's two sisters, Lady Jane Fellowes and Lady Sarah McCorquodale, as they flew with the body into RAF Northolt, near London, last night.

Charles, who much earlier in the day had woken his sons, William and Harry, at Balmoral to break the news to his grieving sons, who earlier had appeared composed when they went with the Queen, their father and other members of the Royal Family at a Balmoral church service yesterday morning.



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He was met on his return by Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, before returning to Scotland to be with his grieving sons, who earlier had appeared composed when they went with the Queen, their father and other members of the Royal Family at a Balmoral church service yesterday morning.

Mr Blair said in a televised

statement: "I am utterly devastated. We are today a nation in a state of shock, in mourning, in grief that is so deeply painful for us."

Last night the Queen was being consulted together with other members of the Royal Family, Diana's family and Downing Street over when the funeral will take place.

They will also decide on whether the Princess will be given a full state funeral and over the length of any official period of mourning. However, the arrival of the coffin, draped in the Royal Standard, bore some of the hallmarks of a state occasion. The body was taken to an unnamed mortuary.

As tributes poured in from world leaders and celebrities for the self-styled Queen of Hearts, including from President Clinton and Mother Teresa, much of Britain came to a standstill.

St Paul's Cathedral, the scene of the Princess's marriage to Prince Charles, held a memorial service last night and as a mark of respect Downing Street announced that Mr Blair had cancelled two meetings he was due to host at No 10 today.

More significantly the campaign over the referendum on

a Scottish parliament – which takes place next week – was suspended, though sources insisted the poll would still go ahead.

The driver of the Mercedes in which the couple were being driven was also killed, but a British bodyguard, named last night as Trevor Rees-Jones, employed by both Dodi and his father, survived.

The crash happened at just after midnight in a tunnel near the Place d'Alma. The car was travelling at "high speed", apparently trying to shake off the paparazzi. The black Mercedes hit pillars dividing the carriageways inside the tunnel and then rebounded against the wall. Police sources said that the horrific damage to the vehicle suggested that it must have been travelling at at least 100kph (60mph), in a 50kph speed limit area.

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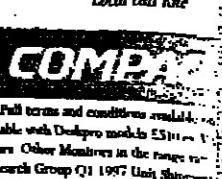
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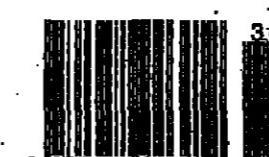
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The effect that this woman has had on our national psyche is only just beginning to be gauged

Things will never be the same again. For her family, for the people of this country, for the press. The profound outpouring of emotion over Diana's death will continue. Tears are being shed by those who have never cared much about the Royal Family, by those who would much prefer a Republic, by those who dismissed her as trivial, self-obsessed and generally silly when she was alive.

The effect that this uneducated woman has had on our national psyche is only just beginning to be gauged.

Icons do not just start. Forever frozen at the height of her beauty, Diana, like Marilyn, will not age. She will continue to glow, forever young, forever vital, in the hearts of those she touched. For the pop princess, the people's princess, the media princess understood the power of touch, the language of intimacy, of a hug, a gesture that was always more eloquent than mere words. The most looked at woman in the world grasped early on the impact of visual communication. She was a child of her time. The manner of her death brings with

it a dark and terrible symbolism. She died because of the world's appetite to carry on looking at her, to see her in her most intimate moments whether she wanted it or not.

This tragedy, like something out of a J G Ballard novel, is a thoroughly modern one, for Diana was a thoroughly modern woman and her life and death embody so many themes of late 20th century. She resided at the apex of so many of our obsessions: our preoccupation with image, the nature of fame, the search for personal growth, the changing nature of family life, the quest for depth in a world of superficiality, the oscillation between victimhood and empowerment, the continuing muddle what is properly private and what is public, the struggle between duty and desire.

Diana represented these contradictions. She lived them and at times spoke openly of them. She made no secret of the dysfunctional family that she was born into and even less of the one that she married into. She sought, as so many of us do, to remedy this through her relationships with her own children. To hear that these poor boys

were yesterday ferried to church in royal cars to observe royal protocol – no matter how they felt – is truly sad. She surely would have wanted her boys to weep openly, not to have to maintain the gashly facade that had already nearly destroyed her.

As Jacques Chirac said, she was a young woman of our age". Had she been born 20 years earlier she would have been expected to put up with her husband's infidelity, to grin and bear it. In refusing to do so,

By Suzanne Moore

she laid open the cynical workings of monarchy, patriarchy and hereditary privilege that had used her as little more than a brood mare. When the fairy tale fractured we saw another story altogether, one that many, particularly women, could relate to. She had her 20th century problems – bulimia, the 20th century's disease of low esteem as well as the much pilloried 20th century desire to "find herself", to give her life meaning. This search for depth was

having known what it was not to be loved, could give love freely. For all her manipulation of the media, her compassion was genuine, a gut reaction rather than a thought-out strategy.

Her immense significance was that she brought into public life an intensely personal language of pain and distress and love and affection. She not only spoke it but insisted that it had a place in the buttoned-up discourse of civic life. Such language, coded as feminine, is too often dis-

missed as inappropriate, as somehow inferior, as far too emotional to be worth taken seriously. She was not a traditional political figure but in realising that her life had been shaped by circumstances beyond her control, that a role had been written for her that she could no longer play, she ruptured the divine order, triggering the desire for a new kind of monarchy.

Endeavouring to live both inside and outside the institution that made her who she was, she short-circuited the relationship between the monarchy and its subjects through another powerful institution – the media – which was as interested in her weaknesses as it was in her strengths. Her instinctive populism meant that she was always the biggest show in town. However we are to define star quality, she had it. It was George Michael who once said that what makes a star is not having something missing, Diana's appetite for attention appeared insatiable. Her quest for privacy was seen as impossible, as if she had signed a Faustian pact. In making the private public, she sacrificed her personal life. The

real Faustian pact however is surely between sections of the press and its readers, who in their millions wanted to see every tear this woman shed.

Camille Paglia wrote of the atavistic religious emotion that the cult of Diana stimulated. Now she is dead, the canonisation of the martyr will assume epic proportions. Yet we should remember that Diana died after dinner at the Ritz with her new lover. She was living her extraordinary life to the full. She wanted to be taken seriously and now the whole world is finally taking her very seriously indeed.

In that fateful interview when she and Charles announced their engagement and were asked if they were in love, Charles made the awful mistake of questioning what love meant. Diana we always felt knew what love meant. Now she is lost, never to be replaced, our public grief shows that she was loved more than she ever knew.

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the tragedy

Diana 1961-1997

paparazzi that ended in carnage

Even in
the tiniest
ways,
she had
touched
their lives

A middle-aged man stood apart from the crowd, his face impassive as he leaned against the railing. He had been up all night, praying for Princess Diana's survival. When he heard she had not made it, he headed for Kensington Palace. He had hardly stopped crying since.

For the past few years he had met the Princess at least once a week. Whenever she had a birthday or anniversary he had made a point of giving her some flowers or a present. Only last Thursday he had delivered 100 red roses to her door, to mark the first anniversary of her divorce. "She came out to receive them personally," he said. "She shook my hand and smiled at me. I'll always remember that smile."

Now he felt physically sick: it was like losing a member of his family or his best friend, he said. Such a special bond seemed odd – until slowly it emerged that this was the homeless man whom Princess Diana had famously saved from drowning in a lake in Regent's Park three years ago. Martin O'Donoghue, as he was then (he has changed his name by deed poll and grown a beard to avoid being recognised by the press) feels he owes everything to Princess Diana. "If it hadn't been for her, I wouldn't have been where I am today."

There were thousands outside Kensington Palace yesterday who felt similarly moved by the death of Princess Diana. People of all nationalities, all walks of life and ages had come to pay their last respects.

A South African tourist joined an orderly queue alongside an HIV-positive man who had bumped into Princess Diana on an early morning shopping spree in Harvey Nichols before he had been diagnosed. A Croatian woman was comforted by a young boy, while a Chinese man tied a white silk scarf to the railings and burnt incense above it.

One card was signed "on behalf of land mine survivors and



Touched by Diana: Grief and disbelief at the news of the Princess's death were etched on the faces of people who gathered outside Buckingham Palace yesterday

Photograph: Tom Pilston

victims", another from "The people of Pakistan". Yet another came from the "Somali community". A helium balloon had "Our Queen of Hearts" written across it in big letters, words often repeated, as if Princess Diana had been writing her own obituary in the *Panorama* interview two years over and over again. People were saying "she was one of us".

Biba Blaskovic, a 49-year-old Croatian, knelt before the gilded gates, praying and crossing herself with her rosary. The entrance had become a sort of shrine and anyone who drew near automatically respected the solemnity. Ms Blaskovic

pressed tissues to her eyes to stem the tears, murmuring that Princess Diana was "like a Catholic saint". A chapel should be built where people could go and pray to her, she added.

Beneath the surface, there was a barely suppressed rage. People wanted someone or something to blame. When a man stood up and gave a spontaneous speech castigating the wall of photographers, the crowd let out a cheer. "Parasites," they chorused. "The press got their blood money."

Others took swipes at the Royal Family. "Her husband's no good," wailed an Iranian woman. "At least she knew hap-

iness for two months of her life," cried another. One card was pointedly addressed to HRH Princess of Wales.

Some mourners lit candles, others brought teddy bears. Many scrawled messages on the familiar head-shaped postcards of Princess Diana in a sparkling tiara. Royal Ballet programmes, a Rolling Stones record sleeve and, regrettably, a Harrods drink container, were among the tributes people left.

Lord Thomas and his partner Ceri, both wearing red ribbons, were devastated by the sudden loss. As fundraisers for Aids charities, they would sorely miss Diana. But they were de-

termined to retain some sense of humour. "She may have been a Princess," said Ceri, "but she's been loved by queens all over London and there will be one big party for her. We'll send her off in style."

Mike Berry, a station assistant at High Street Kensington tube station, would miss her too. "She was always about," he said, adding his bouquet to the pile. "She was always very pleasant. Up and down the High Street. One of us."

Mike O'Donoghue, the tramp whom Princess Diana had prepared to leave. He had places to go and people to see: *The Sun* had bought his story.

She came out to receive the flowers personally. She shook my hand and smiled at me. I'll always remember that smile. It's like losing my best friend.

Martin O'Donoghue

A bunch of red roses swung gently over the tunnel mouth

John Lichfield
and Joanna Lee
Paris

A bunch of red roses hung by a length of string from the top of the tunnel mouth, twisting gently in the slipstream from the cars once again speeding below.

By mid-day, there were scores of bunches of flowers all over the Place d'Alma: some piled up on either side of the tunnel in which Diana was fatally injured; some propped up against the statue of the Flame of Liberty in the square above. Most had messages in French: some in English. "May you rest in peace, Diana. We will not forget you, Queen of Hearts". "Thank you for all that you have given us. So sorry that it has ended this way"; and: "Diana, I hope you will rest now a little. We are all with you forever".

Crowds came and went: many well-wishers, others just curious, unsuspecting tourists, attracted by the fuss, and astonished to discover what had happened.

Diana and Dodi's car, acceler-

erating to avoid snappers, crashed in the epicentre of tourist Paris. "Lady Diana was killed here? You're kidding me," one American was saying as a French passer-by tried to break the news to him in broken English. "Diana and her lover," he said. "They were being chased by the photographers ..."

In the trampled garden above the tunnel mouth, two middle-aged men were having an argument in front of a TV camera. Witnesses? No, just theorists. "Have you ever had motor-cycle lights pursuing you in the dark? That could have caused that accident alone," said one. "You know nothing. They must have been driving too fast. There is a sharp bend in the tunnel ..."

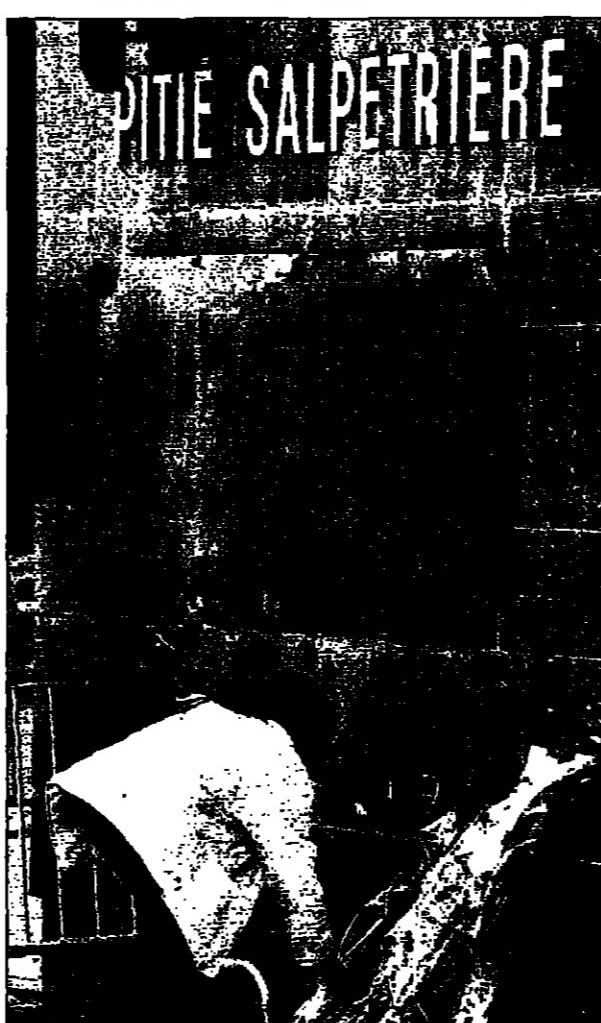
The shallow underpass, with concrete pillars dividing the carriageways, is part of a network of fast routes built along the banks of the Seine in the 1970s. One middle-aged woman was leaning over the barrier, staring down at the road into the tunnel. "I came as soon as I heard the news on the radio, just for the sake of a photo."

A mother's death is nearly always hard to take, at any age, but when she dies just as her children are entering their teens, just as they are beginning to flap their wings in preparation for their flight, this is perhaps the worst time of all. At a moment when 15-year-old William and 12-year-old Harry should be looking forward, with the stability of their mother to keep them secure in the background, she is suddenly gone, in a single,

cruel flash. No long illness to prepare them; just a tragic shocking accident that came completely out of the blue.

Apart from the misery of losing pretty much of a super-mum, with her spontaneous kisses, her own obvious enjoyment when she accompanied them to the movies, McDonald's or Alton Towers, there will be anger and guilt.

Prince William has long played, to an extent, the little man around the house. He



A tribute being placed at the hospital in eastern Paris to which the Princess was taken after the accident

Prince paid his last respects ... then the coffin lid was closed

Louise Jury
Paris

She came to say her final goodbye to the woman the French call Lady Di. Perched on a wall next to the railings of the Hôpital Salpêtrière, a middle-aged Parisienne, had tears in her eyes. "It's very sad. Lady Di was very, very kind. The whole country liked her a great deal," she said.

Michele Dupont, her friend, said they had come to show "solidarity". "It's impossible to understand this," she said.

Just as crowds had gathered outside Kensington Palace, the people of France came yesterday to the hospital where staff had fought to save Diana.

About 5.40 local time they saw a grave-faced Prince Charles arrive, accompanied by Diana's two sisters, Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes, together with her husband Robert, the principal private secretary to the Queen, to be greeted by 12 members of the Guard Républicaine in blue, gold and red uniforms.

Inside, he met President Chirac and two of the doctors who tried to save Diana, Professor Bruno Riou, an anaesthetist, and Professor Alain Pavil, a cardiac surgeon.

The Prince and the two sisters were then led to a private room where Diana had been laid out in a coffin and they paid their respects. The lid of the coffin was then closed and draped with the royal emblem and placed in a blue Renault hearse.

A select number of photographers had been invited to the hospital for a short photocall and some hospital staff shouted at them, "Assassins" and "Show some respect".

After 25 minutes, the party left the hospital. French pall-bearers carried the coffin, now draped in the Royal Standard, to a hearse, led by the Reverend Martin Draper of the Anglican St George's Cathedral in Paris. As the hearse left the building, an embassy aide said: "Quelle jour, quelle horreur."

Two aides each carried a bouquet of lilies and gladioli, which were placed on the cof-

fin before the cortège left for Villacoublay military airport for the return flight to Britain. As it swept away, the crowd broke out into a ripple of applause, like an audible signal of condolence.

At the airport, Charles watched grimly as the coffin was loaded into the belly of the plane by eight pallbearers led by the bearer party commander, Flight Lieutenant Kelly. French troops stood silently to attention, weapons across their chests in salute.

As the coffin left for Britain, the French reflected on the special popularity that Diana had among them. Outside the hospital, many had spoken of the effect her death would have on the young prince and discussed the "tragedy" of her life. And for those who continued to stand outside long after the royal party had been and gone, Diana was clearly not like any other patient at all.

On the hospital steps, candles flickered in memory of a woman who had been held in special regard by the French.

Anger, guilt and the challenge for her two 'little men'



Virginia Ironside
on the prospects
for the Princes

has been of the James Morrison Morrison Wetherby George Dupree type of boy, who "took great care of his mother, though he was only three." Mother, he said, said James. "Mother," he said, said he, "Don't go down to the end of the town without consulting me." Although it's an arch poem, by AA Milne, it sums up precisely the responsibility that even the smallest of boys can feel for their mothers; and when, as in this

case, she did go down to the end of the town and never come back, William may well feel immense, irrational guilt.

The boys' feelings will not be helped by the fact that the Royal Family's mother was always an outsider, and however much they may make declarations of affection now, she and they often appeared at loggerheads. And who have the boys got to turn to now? Only the bogeyman of her life, the Royal Family.

In reality I have no doubt that Prince Charles, who has seen his sons for six months of every year, Tiggy Legge Bourke, who has been an affectionate nanny figure to them, and the rest of the relations, will be supportive, but there is no getting away from the boys' feeling that to blend in with that side of the family will be siding with the enemy, disloyal to their mother. They will be put into a tremendously difficult situation.

They will, too, be enraged and overwhelmed by the enormity of the situation. Adults all round them will be yakking on about the Princess's great work for charity, her beauty, her kindness, her heroism ...

William and Harry will feel in the background. What about us, they will be saying? Aren't we, who were the most important people in mum's life, now still more important than anything? We couldn't care less how many more victims she cuddled, it's our cuddles we'll miss.

The Princess of Wales prettily lost her own mother when she ran off when Diana was six. This always caused her great problems. Her death will cause the boys enormous problems, too. But perhaps, and hopefully, she will have given them just enough good mothering to help them through this awful, tragic time in their young lives.

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Diana 1961-1997

the tributes

'Devastated' PM tells of grief for people's princess

Ian Burrow

An emotional Tony Blair described Diana as the "people's princess" as he led the nation's tributes to the Princess of Wales. Speaking in a trembling

voice outside a church in his Sedgefield constituency, he said that Britons would never forget Diana, the Princess who had brought Dodi Hockley and comfort to people all over the world.

"They liked her, they loved her, they regarded her as one private of the people," he said. "She was word in the people's princess and that's how she will stay, how she will couple remain, in our hearts and in our memories for ever."

"They went on: "I feel, like everyone else in this country, utterly devastated. We are just today a nation in a state of shock, in mourning, in grief that pursues so deeply painful for us."

As the country awoke to the news of the fatal crash, political, church leaders, charity

Princesses and entertainers joined the Princess's friends and relatives in paying tribute to what she had achieved in her short Italian life.

had it. The Princess's brother, Earl Spencer, spoke of his "heartbreak".

Italy. He said: "All those who they have come into contact with

Spina, particularly over the last 17 years, will share my family's Hotelier. She was unique. She understood the most precious needs of human beings, particularly those who suffered. Her one vibrancy, combined with a very spiritual sense of duty, has now gone forever."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, who recently joined the Princess at Prince William's confirmation at Spina, said: "The world has lost

one vibrant, lovely young person. The word passion seems to chase her up, commitment, to Charles, to causes. She was a deeply goes religious person in the sense that she cared about people. She

didn't associate with institutional Christianity. There was her faith in her whole personality."

away Cardinal Basil Hume, leader of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, said: "My



Tony Blair (left), who in an emotional tribute praised the 'people's Princess', and her brother, Earl Spencer (right), who spoke of her great sense of duty

She was unique. She understood the most precious needs of human beings, particularly those who suffered

Earl Spencer, Diana's brother

deepest sympathy goes out to all the Royal Family and particularly to her two sons, to whom she was so devoted."

The desire of the Princess to help those less fortunate than herself was the recurring theme among those seeking words to express her legacy.

Nick Partridge, chief executive of the Terrence Higgins Trust, said she had taken the stigma away from Aids.

"She was one of the first and most committed champions on this issue. It will be a struggle for the Aids community to come to terms with her death," he said.

Television presenter Esther Rantzen, who founded the charity Childline, said: "People in Wales loved her.

"I am as broken-hearted as the rest of the country," he said.

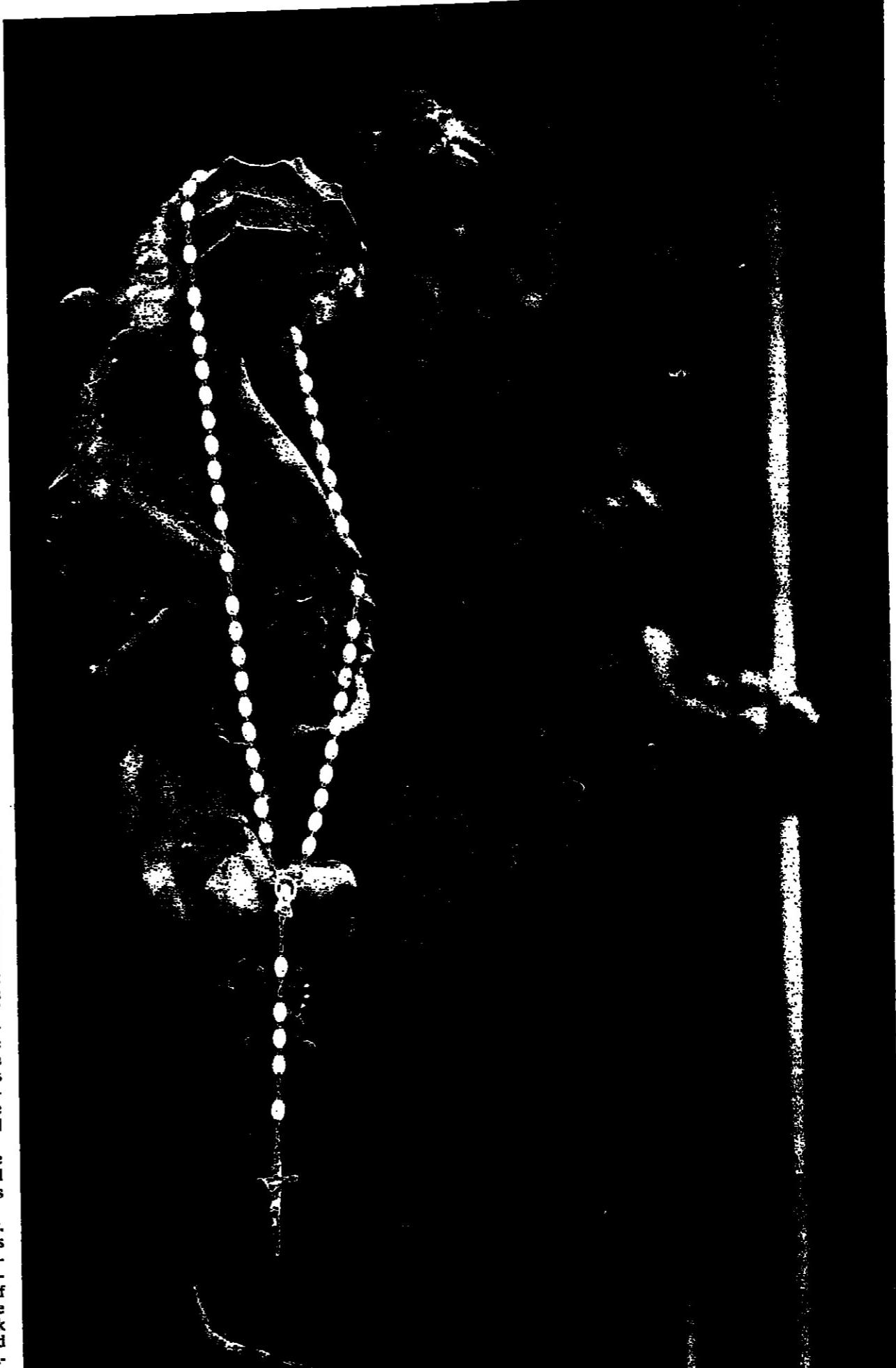
"We have suffered a grievous loss because she was unique. No one ever contained so much compassion and care in one body."

Only six weeks ago the Princess attended a memorial mass in Milan for murdered fashion designer Gianni Versace. During the Mass the Princess comforted her friend Elton John and yesterday the singer said of her death: "The world has lost one of its most compassionate humanitarians and I have lost a special friend."

Rosa Monckton, who recently holidayed with the Princess, said: "I would just like to say that as a friend she was steadfast and loyal and whenever I had any setback in my life she was immediately there and would drop everything."

"She did everything from the heart. Her heart ruled her head which is why, I think, she was so often misunderstood."

The Opposition Leader, William Hague, said: "She was a unique and very lively and attractive individual and so people will feel a personal sense of loss. We should also pay tribute today to the tremendous work she did for people involved with drugs ... with Aids and other diseases for homeless people, for young people in general, for causes such as the arts."



One of the many tributes left yesterday outside Buckingham Palace

Photograph: Brian Hains

From Mandela to Clinton, the world pours out a litany of heartfelt grief

Andrew Marshall

There are always ritual outpourings of grief when a person with the world status of Princess Diana dies. But the reactions yesterday were far more heartfelt, more personal and direct than usual. Princess Diana was known personally to many of the world's leaders, and for once the grief and regret were real.

In one of the most moving tributes, Nelson Mandela said that he and fellow South Africans were "devastated" by the news. "I had the honour of hosting her a few months ago and was tremendously impressed by her. She was undoubtedly one of the best ambassadors for Great Britain," he said.

"I found her very grateful, highly intelligent and committed to worthy causes and was tremendously impressed by her warmth."

"We liked her very much. We admired her work," Bill Clinton said. "For myself, I will always be glad that I knew the princess and always think of her in very strong and positive terms, as will Hillary."

He sent a message of condolences that sounded more than usually heartfelt. "I know that this is a very difficult time for millions of people in the United Kingdom, who are deeply shocked and grieving, and the American people send their condolences. We value their friendship and we understand this great and painful experience," he said.

President and Mrs Clinton were told while they were at a beach party. They embraced and were visibly shaken, a spokesman said, then settled in front of a television set with other party guests to watch breaking news coverage. They left the party soon afterwards.

Russia's President Boris Yeltsin also expressed his deep sorrow. "The President of the Russian Federation B.N. Yeltsin is deeply shocked by the news from Paris of the tragic loss of Princess Diana," said a statement from the Kremlin. "She was well known and loved by the Russian people. All know of Princess Diana's big contribution to charitable work, and not only in Great Britain," it said.

There was deep regret in Aus-



Nelson Mandela and Jacques Chirac were among the world leaders to pay tribute to the Princess of Wales yesterday



Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin were among the world leaders to pay tribute to the Princess of Wales yesterday

tralia from republicans and royalists alike. "On behalf of the Australian government and the Australian people I want to extend my very deep sympathy, particularly to her two young sons who have suffered the trauma of a marriage break-up and have now lost their mother at the very young age of 36," said Australian Prime Minister John Howard.

The Princess had done much to keep the monarchy's image youthful and contemporary in Australia. "She was well known and loved by the Australian people. All know of Princess Diana's big contribution to charitable work, and not only in Great Britain," it said.

French President Jacques Chirac said: "It is with tremendous emotion that I learn of the brutal loss

of Lady Diana. She was a young woman of our time, warm, full of life and generosity. Her tragic death will be profoundly felt because she was a familiar figure to everyone."

Several politicians commented caustically on the press pursuit of Diana, which precipitated her death.

Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl called Diana "the victim of an evermore brutal and unscrupulous competition of a part of the media. This terrible accident and her death should finally give those responsible in the media a reason to reflect."

In Sweden, the spokeswoman for the royal household, Elisabeth Taras-Wallberg, said: "When you lit-

Palace breaks news on Internet

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

The news of the Princess's death spread so rapidly over the Internet that by 8.30am yesterday, one Australian user said, "Everyone knows about Di's death by now."

But it took Buckingham Palace another hour to re-jig its official Web page (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/>) to include the news. The normal crest and picture of Buckingham Palace were replaced with a sombre black background and an image of a smiling princess carrying a bouquet of flowers with the simple caption: "Diana, Princess of Wales 1 July 1961 - 31 August 1997". It also included an official, if brief and bowdlerised, biography, and a page on which users could pass their condolences on to the Royal Family.

The former 165 pages of notes about the family was cut to fewer than 10, all about Diana. As soon as the changes had been made, the site was overwhelmed with "hits" from users all over the world logging in for news and to pay their respects.

Set up in May, the Royal Family's website – operated and maintained by the Government – is already one of the most popular sites on the World Wide Web. In one week, it was visited almost 1.3 million times.

News sites such as that operated by CNN (<http://www.cnn.com/>) also carried comprehensive coverage of the accident in Paris, updating it through the day as pictures – including that of the princess's coffin – became available.

But in the Internet's discussion groups, the reaction ranged from mixtures of horror and sadness, to conspiracy theories, to a cynical shrug from those who felt that the accident was a small event in a distant country involving people they did not know. "Call me paranoid if you like," began one, who then suggested that landmine manufacturers and the Royal Family were "none to [sic] happy with Diana interfering with affairs they'd rather like to be untouched by such a high-profile figure."

Others felt it was a routine car accident. "The driver was just going too fast for the conditions," said one bored American. And one cynical poster suggested the lesson was: "Don't drive a mercedes at high speed into a concrete tunnel. Much better to slow down and smile at the photographers."

Blood on their hands, says brother

Anthony Bevins
London
Mary Braid
Johannesburg

The most bitter condemnation of the media's alleged role in Princess Diana's death came from her brother Earl Spencer outside Tarystone House, his palatial home in Constantia, one of Cape Town's most opulent suburbs.

"I always believed the press would kill her in the end," he said. "But not even I could believe they would take such a direct hand in her death as seems to be the case."

"It would appear that every proprietor and every editor of every publication that has paid for intrusive and exploitative photographs of her, encouraging greedy and ruthless individuals to risk everything in pursuit of Diana's image, has blood on his hands today."

A long-time critic of press invasion of privacy, he did not

conceal his contempt for those to whom he had just spoken. The break-up of his own marriage came under intense press scrutiny after he moved to the Cape. And when Princess Diana visited him in Cape Town last year she found there was no escape from the paparazzi.

But while the princess's death inevitably raised the issue of new curbs on the media and privacy legislation, senior Government sources cast doubt on the prospect of such changes.

The issue was first raised by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, who said in an early morning statement from Singapore that after the immediate shock of grief, "long term, serious questions will have to be asked as to whether the aggressive intrusion into her privacy has contributed to this tragedy."

The Prime Minister himself has also taken the view that questions of privacy and taste are best left to the self-regulation of the newspaper industry.

But Lord Wakeham, chairman of the self-regulatory Press Complaints Commission, said that the immediate aftermath of the tragedy was not the right moment to make a judgement.

Having recently warned that a privacy law could actually worsen the problem of intru-

sion, Lord Wakeham said: "I shall be watching the situation and have to think what to do."

It is expected that the Commons' National Heritage Select Committee will undertake an inquiry into privacy, but Government sources said a number of questions would need to be taken into consideration, not least how effective the law could be.

There is a French law of pri-

vacy, but that did not stop the Paris paparazzi pursuing the princess — nor would it stop the international media publishing the product, or the public buying newspapers that gave such pictures priority.

Yesterday Mark Samuels, a paparazzo who had followed Diana for five years, until six months ago, said: "A privacy law is simply not going to work, this took place in France where they have got quite strict laws."

"But frankly with Diana gone I can see the papers easing off because there is simply no one else like her around".

An official report on privacy, chaired by David Calcutt QC, said in 1990 that if the press "failed to demonstrate that non-statutory self-regulation could be made to work effectively, a statutory press tribunal for handling complaints should be introduced".

Following a review of self-regulation, Sir David reported in 1993 that he had, with regret, reached the conclusion "that the

Press Complaints Commission, as set up by the press, has not proved itself to be an effective regulator."

He recommended a statutory regime.

David Mellor, a former heritage secretary who was himself a victim of intrusion, with the bugging of a conversation between himself and Antonia de Sancha, once famously warned that the press had been given one more chance to clean up its act — it was drinking at the "Last Chance Saloon".

Yesterday Mr Mellor said the life of the princess had been lost because of her hatred and fear of press photographers.

"This has to be a defining moment in our society," he said, "when we recognise that we have come to the end of a chapter and have to start a new one in civilised behaviour. The world cannot be the same again after this tragedy."

Having recently warned that a privacy law could actually worsen the problem of intru-

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*Diana 1961-1997**the fayed**Du*

Outsider's son who courted a princess

Ian Burrell

It was a relationship that lasted only a few short weeks but it gave Diana, Princess of Wales, some of the happiest moments of her life. Yet it also terrified sections of the British establishment.

Dodi Fayed lived like a prince, owning a string of mansions in Beverly Hills and moving effortlessly in the circles of the international jet set.

But he was also the son of Mohamed Al Fayed, the billionaire owner of Harrods and the *bête noire* of the British ruling classes.

John L. Twice spurned in his quest for British citizenship, Mr Al Fayed had apparently exacted his revenge by destroying the Conservative government through its revelations in the "cash-for-questions" affair, parazzi Having already controversially gained ownership of "the top people's store" he could now imagine word of himself in attendance at the next coronation as the step-grandfather couple of the new king.

The public only became aware of parazzi Diana's links with the Fayed's in July. On when the Princess was pictured in suggest a swimsuit on board the Harrods just on owner's yacht in the French riviera. It later emerged that the 64-year-old proprietor had long thought that Diana and his son were

Span well-matched and had invited the time. Princess to join his family, including Prince Dodi, 41, on holiday in St Tropez. To his joy the couple clicked last b. When new pictures quickly emerged of the pair in tender embrace the nation was stunned yet fascinated. "Dodi's New Man" is Al Fayed's Son and "Dodi's Secret Hol

african with Harrods Hunk Dodi", ran the Italy newspaper headlines.

But the carpings from royal ob-

servers began almost at once. "What rapturously earth does she think she's play-

Hotel sing at," said one courtier.

He may be frightfully generous

own with his yachts but he is not the sort

who strikes me as being a good long-

one-term bet."

It was pointed out that Dodi had

photographed previously romanced countless

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The best fundraiser in the world

'There are few who work so devotedly for the well-being of the poor'

Imran Khan

Michael Streeter

She was probably the most successful fund-raiser on the planet, and charities yesterday said the loss of the Princess would leave an enormous hole in the world of voluntary organisations and campaigns.

A year ago, she severed links with all but six of the charities with which she was involved – a decision predicted by some to cost the losers a total of £300m – but still left her backing to many causes.

Although Diana made a massive contribution as a fund-raiser – the recent New York auction of her old dresses alone raised £3.5m for charity and a seat next to her could sell for \$100,000 – it was also her ability to raise the profile of issues such as Aids and landmines which impressed many observers.

The British Red Cross, one of those she officially "dropped" last July, said yesterday that the effect of her subsequent support for the campaign to outlaw the use of landmines, including visits to Angola and Bosnia, had been incalculable. "We had been working long and hard to raise public awareness. The impact she had was absolutely phenomenal," said a spokesman. "For many people she was the landmines campaign. She is irreplaceable in that respect."

He pointed out that her involvement had come at a crucial time with a new international treaty being negotiated and a change of government in Britain. Officials had held talks with the Princess about the prospect of her visiting another country, probably Cambodia, next year.

Meanwhile, her death caused



Diana visiting an Angolan minefield earlier this year. The Princess gave incalculable support to the campaign to ban landmines. Photograph: Reuters

George Foulkes, international development junior minister, to call for a ban on the manufacture, export and use of anti-personnel landmines at the November conference in Canada. "It would be a fitting tribute to the memory of Princess Diana if countries were now to pledge themselves to sign up to the Ottawa process and make what was her dream become a reality," he said.

Aids and HIV charities also claimed that the role of the Princess, who was patron of the National Aids Trust, had done much to help their work. Nick

Partridge, chief executive of Terence Higgins Trust, said: "Diana took the stigma away from Aids. She was one of the first and most committed champions on this issue."

Much of the Princess's work underlined her obvious love of children. Television presenter Esther Rantzen, who founded the charity Childline, said:

"She gave us personal donations when we started. She was in there right at the beginning. She met deprived children so often in private and she also made many public visits to promote our work to protect children."

Diana's death also caused distress internationally where she was a recognisable name, even in countries where Britain has little direct influence.

Imran Khan, the former Pakistani cricket hero and a friend of the Princess, who invited Diana to Pakistan two months ago to help an appeal for his charity cancer hospital, said: "This world has very few people like Diana who work so devotedly for the well-being of the poor, deprived and down-trodden people."

He added: "There was hardly any non-Muslim who worked

in a Muslim country with as much devotion and dedication for the sick and poor in Pakistan."

When the Princess made her surprise decision last year to sever formal links with most of her charities, including household names such as Help the Aged, Bernards and Relate, it was predicted that in fund-raising alone it could cost them a total of £300m. Many, though, claim that through being force to work harder they have saved off any loss.

However, her undoubtedly fund-raising ability has been

shown on numerous occasions. A two-day trip to the United States in June last year raised more than £1m from a round of lunches and functions.

But Vicki Fulman, spokeswoman for the Charities Aid Foundation, which co-ordinates research in the sector, said the loss of Diana as a fund-raiser and personal donor was only part of the tragedy.

"In financial terms it is going to be significant. But she also raised awareness of issues, which is a large part of what charities do. She is going to be very deeply missed."

The six she cared for

Charity:
Leprosy Mission.
Diana's Position:
Patron
How helped:

After being photographed with a sufferer in 1989, Diana was approached by the charity. Rev. Tony Lloyd, Executive Director, says: "Since April 90, she has supported us substantially, both directly through very substantial personal donations, and indirectly by raising our profile." In March she hosted a meal at Kensington Palace which raised £100,000.



Charity:
English National Ballet.
Diana's Position:
Patron

Patron since 1988, she has hosted up to 5 fund-raising events a year, typically raising £50,000 - £200,000 a time. Last December she is thought to have been behind agreement by Harrods to provide £150,000 sponsorship of this year's Nutcracker production. Jim Fletcher, spokesman, said: "She was very much involved with the running of the Company, and would frequently come to visit the members."



Charity:
Centrepoint.
Centrepoint:
charity for the homeless
Diana's Position:

Patron
How helped:
Charity said her impact on revenue "Unquantifiable". But spokeswoman Lisa Mangan, said: "Diana raised our profile immeasurably, not so much by public fund-raisers but by one-on-one visits."



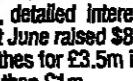
Charity:
National Aids Trust.
Diana's Position:

Patron
How helped:
Has been a Friend of the Trust since 1987 and became Patron in 1991. Apart from raising profile/awareness, also lent name to series of Princess of Wales Concert of Hope events at Wembley arena. The most lucrative, in 1993, raised around £200,000 for distribution by the trust.



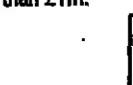
Charity:
Royal Marsden NHS Trust.
Diana's Position:

President
How helped:
A trip to the hospital was one of her first official engagements as a princess, and maintained keen, detailed interest in patients and research. A trip to Chicago last June raised \$800,000 for the hospital; the auction of her clothes for £3.5m in New York this year will benefit the hospital by more than £1m.



Charity:
Great Ormond Street Hospital.
Diana's Position:

President
How helped:
Involved for more than ten years, she was best known for her official and private visits to wards, where she had the knack of seeking out the shyest children and "making their day", says officials. With Prince Charles she launched the Wishing Well appeal which raised more than £50million.



Michael Streeter and Louise Hancock

The final mission of the designer ambassador

Kim Sengupta

No one was to know it at the time, of course, but the trip three weeks ago to Bosnia was to be the last public visit abroad by Diana, Princess of Wales. The journey was to bring comfort to landmine victims, she said, but for the hundred journalists in attendance the only real interest was in her relationship with Dodi Fayed.

In retrospect one can perhaps say the trip was a vignette of the last chapter in the life of Diana, how her public duties became subsumed by tales from her private life, and her relationship with the media, sometimes acrimonious, but also in many ways mutually supportive.

It would be disingenuous for the Princess's advisers to say they did not want the press in Bosnia. There was certainly no discouragement from her office, and the Foreign Office had to send a young diplomat from Belgrade to the ringmaster of the media circus.

After her highly successful visit to Angola with the Red Cross earlier this year Diana had expressed the wish to go to another area affected by mines. Bosnia was an obvious choice, but there were potential pitfalls. The wife of the wanted war criminal, Radovan Karadzic, was the head of the Bosnian-Serb branch of the Red Cross, and British troops had taken part in the shooting of another



The Princess with members of the UN force in Bosnia during her visit three weeks ago, part of her campaign against the use of landmines

Serb war crime suspect. Tension was high.

But the Princess did go to Bosnia, not with the Red Cross, but with an American-based charity, Survivors Network. And with the approval of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary.

Revelations showed, as royal watchers would say, the two sides of Diana: One day she was outside the Park Lane home of Dodi and the next she was the glamorous member of the glitterati. The next day in Sarajevo, witnessing row after row of blasted streets, she was a sombre and thoughtful ambassador.

In many parts of Bosnia the Princess visited she simply was not known. When she went to the suburb of Bajakov Potek to meet 15-year-old Mirzeta Gabletic, who had lost a leg, the

locals looked bewildered. One young man said: "Some Diana is moving in", another said: "They have come to fix the water and about time too".

There was similar misunderstanding when Diana arrived at the home of Mohammed Soljanić, who had lost both legs to a mine. It was his birthday and he had been told he would get two presents, a pair of prosthetic feet and a visit from a general in the peace-keeping force.

When the Princess arrived the Soljanić family did not know who she was. The neighbours too were bemused.

But the images were moving and the Princess was clearly emotional at meeting those who had suffered horrific injuries due to landmines. Above all to the victims it must have been a welcome signal they

they had not been forgotten.

Diana did not say anything to the media, either about Dodi or even about landmines. But there plenty of shots of her embracing the injured and their families were flashed across the world, making some photographers a lot of money.

Critics said she was manipulating the media. The Princess let it be known that some were determined to misinterpret her most well-intentioned actions. Nothing she did would ever been seen to be right to those jaundiced eyes.

But the first thing she did on the plane home was to go through newspapers with stories about herself and Dodi. That scene seemed to sum up the ultimate difficulty in separating the private and public life of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Treaty could be her memorial

Andrew Marshall

The Princess of Wales's work to end the global scourge of landmines may yield a lasting memorial: an international treaty banning their use.

Today, diplomats from more than 100 countries begin meeting in Oslo with the goal of ending the use of landmines throughout the world. By the end of the two-week conference, backers hope to have drafted a treaty on banning their production, sale or use.

Diana had thrown herself into the campaign against landmines, making trips earlier this

year to Bosnia and Angola to publicise the issue, and ran into a political row when she seemed to be working against government policy. Labour, once elected, took up the cause.

Her support for the campaign was one of its strongest assets. There are about 110 million anti-personnel mines scattered around the world, and it was the damage they caused – particularly to children, which moved the Princess to become involved with the issue. "Most of those you see injured by mines are children, killed by average people, like farmers," said Norway's deputy foreign min-

ister Jan Egeland in advance of the meeting.

The conference continues a series of meetings that began in Canada and are now called the "Ottawa Process". Those talks led to an anti-landmine declaration signed by 98 nations in Brussels in June. Three more countries, the United States, Australia and Poland, have since joined the process.

Norway's goal is a total ban, with no exception for types of mine, or geographical location. But there has been resistance. Some of the world's major powers, including Russia, India, China and Israel, will not be rep-

resented.

The US is taking part with reservations. Although it has agreed to join the Ottawa process, it wants Korea excluded from the ban since it says mines are essential for the defence of South Korea.

The Princess's death is certain to be commemorated at the conference. The United Nations said yesterday that the world had lost an important ambassador. "It is a tragic loss. Her commitment and dedication to a ban on anti-personnel mines brought the issue home to millions around the world," said Fred Eckhard, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, said.

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the leader page

2 Dia

— The beauty who couldn't tame the beast

Created as an icon by press photographs, she lived in the fizzing glare of flashguns, and now she lies dead, a victim of the insatiable lens. Behind the lens stands an industry, an apparatus of buying and selling, proprietors, profits, and, somewhere down that feeding chain, the silent millions of readers who added so handsomely to sales figures whenever Di stories appeared, and who flocked to the news-stands to see the latest blurry colour picture. Earl Spencer's brother, was bitter about it all; she was murdered by the media, he said.

Was she? Certainly it seemed at times that the relentless pursuit of her image had driven her almost demented, living as the harried subject of professional voyeurism is a form of mental torture which no one who hasn't experienced it, at least a little, can fully understand. Yet at other times Diana clearly revelled in her role as the woman that half the world adores, an anted to watch, hear and follow. She parades as not mere victim. She could be a Minutes new, even brilliant, exploiter of the private jaded, both for herself and her characters' causes; and it diminishes her to suggest that otherwise.

All that said, her death ought to start a much-needed debate (which has to be international rather than just national) about the structure and appetites of this just one global industry of images and words.

Yet if we weigh the institutional significance of the Princess's death, the balance is curiously empty. Of course her departure matters for the House of Windsor. But the monarchy is not about to dissolve or to be abolished.

Instead, it is the fourth estate that this death touches most closely – the news-producers, agents of the iconography of the modern world; and not just us, but you, the consumers of news, co-participants in this frenzied dance of public, stars and audience-maximising media.

The manner of her death raises a specific question about the harrying of superstars for their pictures. Few have ever been in Diana's league; the treatment of Hollywood stars may be bad, but they are in the image-selling business. "Paparazzi" – today's buzz-word



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– must not become too easy a herd of scapegoats. The photographers' relentless pursuit of the Princess occurred because there is a wide and rich international market for their work. It is hard to see how that could ever be regulated. In theory, agreement between proprietors might stick, but it is hard to see the American supermarket tabloids or *Oggi* ceasing to find good-looking royalty uninteresting.

Something practical might be done to make Britain a pursuit-free zone, either by making it easier for victims to obtain injunctions or by privacy legis-

lation. This newspaper has supported for some time the principle of a law guaranteeing privacy, noting the absurd disjunction between the scope of official privacy (ie. for government information and officials) and a free-for-all for the rest of the world, mitigated by harsh and anachronistic libel laws. Nothing in Diana's death alters the already strong case for action on this front.

By the same measure, *much in her life* illustrates the reciprocal nature of media relationships: press and broadcasters need willing and co-operative subjects. The Royal Family decided a generation ago that it would manage the media. Until the late Seventies, it did so relatively successfully. Its nervous and half-embarrassed handling of the eruption of the heir to the throne's wife into superstardom was at best amateur. But there is no denying that the House of Windsor (mistakenly) chose to set out on the path that Diana subsequently followed deep into the jungle.

Of course, the media are not innocent carriers. Proprietors have agendas, editors have views of the world to propagate, reporters too often choose the lowest common denominator. But with the exception (to some extent) of the BBC, the media are commercial – we live and die by numbers. The public is well able to demonstrate its tastes in its purchases. The market for newspapers may be oddly skewed in terms of ideology, but it remains an open market; the British public does have other reputable media to choose if they are dismayed with mass-circulation newspapers.

Perhaps Diana was simply a one-off, someone whose extraordinary life since marrying Charles forbids generalisations. She grew from gauche nanny to hardened and emotional superstar in a spectacular way which turned some media people, like some ordinary Diana-watching, into a kind of insanity. She lived, and now has died, in the midst of a love affair with the public, during which her powers of seduction grew ever greater – and were put to good causes. But she was sucked up by forces which, tide-like, came to overwhelm her. Like some heroine of old, she thought she could tame the beasts – and was wrong. Some accidents have a force that feels like Fate. The smash in a Paris tunnel was one. Di, in whose life this paper was not greatly interested, enters a kind of pantheon, the princess-martyr, murdered by the media. A cult will follow. Things weren't quite like that. She was more complicated – and so is the media. But there is enough truth in the story for many – journalists and readers too – to hang their heads. The pursuit was a kind of madness. It was cruel, too.

▪ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ▪



Spanish lesson for the Scots

Sir: As a Spaniard who spends large periods in Britain, I think that Britain has plenty to learn from Spain on the dangers of devolution.

Spanish devolution was devised as a solution to the Catalan and Basque problems. It has aggravated them, and has created many other problems. Soaring nationalism everywhere in Spain, the climate of civil confrontation in the Basque provinces, ETA, linguistic discrimination in several regions, costly and corrupt regional governments, and too many and redundant administrations: these are the problems that devolution has either created or failed to ameliorate in Spain.

As regions are not significantly smaller than the whole nation, devolution does not actually make government appreciably closer to the people. Instead of devolution to regions, it would be much better to preserve the central government while giving more power to local councils and towns.

MIGUEL NAVARRO NAVARRO
London W6

Sir: As one born in Scotland of an English father and a Welsh mother I have no axe to grind, but why is there to be no referendum to see if the English would like independence from their Scottish and Welsh neighbours?

DAVID GERMANAY
Sevenoaks, Kent

Sir: Assuming that there is a "yes" vote on the referendums on Scottish and Welsh devolution, how soon can the English parliament vote to align our clocks with the rest of Europe without interference from Scottish and Welsh MPs?

R J MACY
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Sir: You report (28 August) that "One in six supermarket bills have the price wrong". For the past two years I have been regularly checking my till receipts and either returning to the store or writing to the manager when there has been an error (unfortunately never in my favour).

You are right to blame the speed at which items are scanned. Last month I learnt that the supermarket regularly ran a competition to see which cashier could scan the most items per minute. Small surprise that errors occur.

KAREN LOWTON
Chelmsford, Kent

Encouraging genetic research

Sir: It is wrong to claim that there is a hidden loophole in the proposed European biotechnology directive which would allow "new rights over human genes" (report, 27 August). There is already legislation in place within the European Patents Convention which allows patenting of genes if they have been isolated from the body or produced by a normal technical process and if the normal criteria of patentability can be demonstrated.

Rather than prevent scientific research, as you suggest, the proposed directive will actually encourage it. The benefit of the patent system is that the inventor must publish sufficient detail to enable fellow researchers to undertake their own research.

The intention of the directive will be to harmonise legislation on patents across Europe. It will help British industry, which already leads Europe in the field of biotechnology, to earn a fair reward from its search for new medicines for many as yet unconquered diseases and bring hope to many millions of patients.

The directive has been discussed at length within six expert committees of the European Parliament, and more than 450 amendments have been debated for more than a year before the recent EU plenary vote – hardly a process in which clauses have been buried as you describe.

Professor TREVOR M JONES
Director-General
The Association of the British
Pharmaceutical Industry
London SW1

Sir: Your leading article of 27 August hopes that relations between independent schools and the Labour government will be those of "beneficial engagement". I agree, which is why I said in my opening address to the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools: "We welcome the new administration's

MI5's passion for secrecy

Sir: M15 (report, 28 August; Letters, 30 August) is not only uncontrolled and basically unsupervised, its secrecy borders on the absurd.

I tried for over a year to obtain from MI5 its files on the ex-Communist anti-imperialist campaigner George Padmore, who died in 1959. The final word from MI5 was that they could, by law, release any files they might have. However, as they were not obliged to do so, they would not.

The only explanation offered was that national security and agents might be jeopardised. The former is ridiculous. As for the latter, why not ink out the agents' names (if they are still alive), as is done, for example, in the USA?

MARIKA SHARWOOD
Senior Research Fellow
Institute of Commonwealth Studies
University of London

Schools' high moral duty

Sir: Your leading article of 27 August hopes that relations between independent schools and the Labour government will be those of "beneficial engagement". I agree, which is why I said in my opening address to the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools: "We welcome the new administration's

talk of partnership ... We must embrace that offer and play our part in raising overall standards of education in this country."

If we do manage to construct a beneficial partnership, it will be no thanks to your distortion of the main part of my speech. I neither said nor implied that independent schools "hold the key to morality". I twice acknowledged that independent schools had no monopoly in this territory. Indeed, I gave examples of areas – in behaviour on the sports field, for example – where we have failed the high standards we set ourselves. I urged the Government to learn from good practice in "both maintained and independent schools".

I take particular exception to the implication that prep schools will not welcome the children of divorced parents. As a child of divorced parents myself, I feel well-qualified personally to draw attention to the life-long effects of divorce upon children – something all schools, not just prep schools, need to be aware of and compensate for.

My central concern, however, is one which I am sure exercises most of my colleagues in both independent and state schools. In a society where many moral and cultural norms are collapsing or being challenged, unreasonable expectations are being placed on schools. Education does not take place in a vacuum, and it is clearly not just a matter of measurable academic outcomes. Schools cannot but be concerned about the

effects on children of pervasive effects in the media or of the widespread disintegration of family stability.

Ways in which independent schools can compensate for these factors may be among the issues the new government would be well advised to study more closely.

Dr R J ACHESON
Chairman
Incorporated Association of
Preparatory Schools
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire

Sir: Your leading article misses the point. State education has serious deficiencies. The 7 per cent of the population who do not use it consist of the wealthy and powerful decision-makers in our society. Are these two facts connected? If the influence of the 7 per cent could be brought to bear on the problems of state education for reasons of self-interest, would there be improvements?

The point is not to consider "abolition" of private education, but to unite it with the state system. Would not such a development have a beneficial effect on the crippling class system our country endures?

With the new, invigorating political atmosphere we are now very briefly enjoying, we have an unrepeatable opportunity to tackle this problem. Must it be missed?

PETER RAINHEY

Maidstone,
Kent

Sir: I was always under the impression that e-mail was fast. It's not.

Yesterday I e-mailed myself at home, about eight miles away from where I work, in central London. The e-mail arrived after the second post. If I'd posted the message it would have arrived earlier.

ANDY LEWIS
London SW1

Sir: Enough of whingeing about the Blair's eating habits (Letters, 28 August). It is high time that we had a Tony and Cherie New Labour Cookery Book.

SIMON J SNIGG
London N8

Cabinet kitchen

Sir: Enough of whingeing about the Blair's eating habits (Letters, 28 August). It is high time that we had a Tony and Cherie New Labour Cookery Book.

SIMON J SNIGG
London N8

The Palace will not be able to cope with a Saint Diana



by Polly Toynbee

Where does the tragedy of Diana, Princess of Wales' death leave the monarchy? Constitutional experts were quick yesterday to say that it would make no difference, that it was an irrelevance. "Of no constitutional consequence whatever," said Lord Blake, echoed by others. Technically, of course, they are right. Constitutionally, she was nothing.

But Princess Diana's life as a royal changed everything for the monarchy. She made the personal political for them. The drama surrounding every twist and turn of her story, from her engagement to her divorce and her last romance, made the emotional a constitutional question. The Charles and Diana saga is the main explanation for the astonishing fall in the popularity of the monarchy. Why else did a recent Mori poll find that 55 per cent of the people now think the country would be better off or at least no worse off as a republic?

Her story is not over yet for the monarchy. Diana dead may threaten their stability and tranquillity as strongly, if not more so than the divorced Diana they could not silence. The world's most famous woman now enters the stratosphere of dead icons, from Princess Grace to Marilyn Monroe. More than either of those, in this celebrity-transfixed age where even Elvis has spawned a religion, the tributes flowing in suggest a mantle of modern sainthood falling upon her. "She was the people's princess and that is how she will be stay in our hearts and our memories forever," said an emotion-filled Prime Minister, setting that tone.

Diana the Difficult was the problem the palace could tackle but Saint Diana is something the palace can never contend with. There can be no more palace

briefings and malevolent whisperings against her now. No more highly placed sources telling key opinion-formers that she is actually certifiably mad. She will no longer provide opportunities for them to mock her when she poses for fashion magazine front covers and then in the next breath begs the press to leave her alone. There will be no more occasions to pour scorn on her good works, no more private sneers about her selling frocks whose true value was their titillating physical intimacy with her body. She will give no embarrassing interviews, offer the palace no more chances to say that she has broken royal protocol.

If her palace enemies hoped that as she got older she would have presented the world with an increasingly absurd and pathetic spectacle in her search for self-knowledge and love, both personal and public, then their hopes have been dashed. She will stay forever young and forever genuinely tragic. And they, her abusers and traducers, will go down in the Cult of Goddess Diana as the villains. Instead, her star will shine ever more brightly in the beyond where all is forgiven. Her faults, absurdities, confusions will all be forgotten in the overwhelmingly horrible calamity of her death. At last, she will be a pitiable "queen of the people's hearts" – that much-satirised phrase gaining poignancy with every passing year.

How can Prince Charles contend with that? The sorry spectacle of him at the funeral with his sons will summon up a thousand conflicting emotions, including a measure of outrage. Perhaps the mood of the royal fans will be forgiving. Perhaps they will take pity on him in all his contorted awkwardness, so ill at ease with everything in his life. Perhaps they will forgive Camilla, whom Diana fingered so firmly as the destroyer of



Charles and Diana with their children: what if his sons blame him for what happened to their mother?



Photograph: Snowdon

her marriage. Maybe they will want Charles at last to find happiness, and the disappearance of the troublesome Diana will allow the royals to return to the safe, dull, tweedy Balmoral spirit of long ago. But perhaps not. He may become the demon king for worshippers of the Cult of the Goddess Diana. What if they kiss and turn away from him at public events, blaming him, hating him? How much of that could he stand?

Far worse, what if his sons blame him? It won't be long now before Prince William surfaces in his own right with "close friends", briefers and biographers to offer hints as to his state of mind. As we watch the face of that poor child at his mother's funeral, how can we begin to imagine his thoughts? Which of his difficult parents does he blame most? It would be hard to design a background and an upbringing as catastrophic as his has been, all his parents' affairs blazoned in grizzly detail across the press, from the Tampons to the James Hewitt humiliations. If he has survived all that, it will be something of a miracle.

Any psychologist might hazard the fear that this young boy's life risks continuing his dysfunctional family tradition, a damaging cycle of emotional deprivation at the top of society as predictable as any chronicled by social researchers among those at the bottom.

The one thing we do know is that he has a deep and well-founded hatred of the press. Now they have killed his mother, how is he to find some tolerable *modus vivendi* with them? For to be a successful heir and king is to know how to manage the media.

Does any of this matter? Does it threaten the monarchy? There is no republican political project anywhere worth the name. Labour has even postponed reforming the Lords, and Blair and his people are closer to and more effusive about the royals than any prime minister in recent history. Constitutionally, the monarchy is a non-issue.

And yet Diana's arrival and tragic departure from the royal scene may mark a trajectory that has nothing to do with politics and politicians. The erosion of public support may be met by a radical loss of self-confidence within the royal family itself. Can Charles take the strain? Diana was probably not inventing it when she maliciously suggested in her *Panorama* interview that he might not become king. But we know nothing of Prince William if he were to

take the crown. All we can know is that the odds are strongly stacked against him being a more solid, balanced, self-sacrificing person than his parents. Could he really become more able than them to bear the almost intolerable life expected of a king in this media-driven age? Further erosion and implosion of the monarchy is more likely.

Whatever becomes of this stricken family, there, in the firmament above them will hover the problematic image of a woman whose power will not dim. Her story will be used and abused in a thousand ways, twisted and exaggerated, a constant weapon in the hands of enemies of Charles or Camilla. If some day the monarchy finally draws peacefully to a close, Diana's ghostly spirit will have played its part.

A magic mix of star and healer



by David Aaronovitch

"The whole nation," said any body who was asked the question on television or radio yesterday, "is in mourning." We were all, said Mr Blair, experiencing a grief that "was deeply painful for us".

But why? Most government MPs with their capacity to influence legislation – have more constitutional importance than Princess Diana; and certainly ministers exert greater power over our lives. Diana was not a JFK, let alone Nelson Mandela or a Gandhi – an exceptional person whose sacrifice, bravery and vision can shape continents. She wrote poetry, novels or plays, starred in great movies, saved many lives through her scientific discoveries, never risked her life to save others. She was the divorced wife of the ageing heir to the throne of a almost purely ceremonial and increasingly discredited monarchy, and the mother of the heir's probable heir. In a cold sense she was simply the Duchess of York with knobs on.

I have always looked at the monarch and its relationship with the nation with the eye of an untrained anthropologist. When my eight-year-old friends were saluting the flag in the Church every Sunday, I was out with my little placard demonstrating, on behalf of imprisoned Greek leftists, or to show solidarity with Civil Rights in America. So I could understand the emotional attachment such, without actually sharing that particular reverence for the HRHs a HM, a reverence that seemed – via the BBC and the press – to bind the British together. Coronation, Jubilee, Royal Wedding, a combination of ceremony that made it never seem far-fetched to me that there is, apparently, a tribe of hell-hunters on a Melanesian island who revere the Duke of Edinburgh as a god.

With the tide of religious faith withdrawn, people desired a common experience, a group of individuals with whom one could – very loosely – identify, a set of characteristics which help to define the collective, a shared national conversation, collection of taboos and restraints, a permanence that defied the shocks of war and catastrophe. And even now the tug is there: the Great Haseley horticultural show yesterday, deep inside the large, domed marquee, I saw that the second third prizes for the 50th wedding anniversary flower display had gone: compositions featuring the Queen, Prince Philip, their faces appearing through the blossoms like images depicted in an oriental temple.

But this was almost certainly the world of old people. The monarchy itself too snooty, too dim, too stiff and unattractive to survive scrutiny in the sate age. What saved it as a source of interest and discourse was Diana who – instead – became a combination film star, faith healer, the magic mix of flesh and spirit. "She had this extraordinary gait, the Catholic Lord St John of Fawsley yesterday. "She could reach out and touch people spiritually and physically. She could do this because she had suffered", in ways which many women could easily identify with, and because she – at the same time – wonderfully beautiful. If she had had the face of Princess Anne, no magical powers would have been adduced to her.

She also embodied the traditional "The Holy Fool", the innocent, wanted the world to be simple and good, who wished to be the "Queen of Heaven". The only times affection for her ended, was in those moments when she was suspected of scheming calculation.

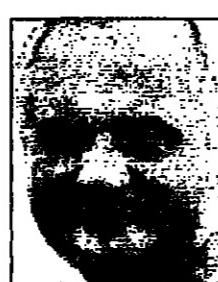
Otherwise, her reputation grew global therapy. Listen to these words the Prime Minister yesterday describing how those who would miss the Princess would be "the sick, the dying, the children and the needy". This is a venerated altarpiece, an apotheosis in words, a woman who was fast becoming a kind of Lourdes on legs.

Her early death ensures a renewal of this semi-religious mythology. Not have Diana the martyr, those clear-looking down from that sympathetic but smiling face. She, who died our sins, because we had to buy the papers that printed the photograph taken by the professionals – made by greed – who eventually killed her, therefore crucified her, with our appetite for celebrity. And, however much we attempt to read paparazzi, we know that it is real fault that she died. It will not be a and I say this in no spirit of levity – before some start to claim that she did not die at all.

And then there is that other myth, just about to be born: those Two Sad Princes, now motherless, updated versions of the Prince of Wales. Will we now do to them what we did to her? Or rather, will you? I have other Gods.

Nobody knew where to put the flowers

Yesterday saw the nation casting around for new rituals to replace the old religious mechanisms for coping with grief



by Paul Vallely

There is something about sudden and violent death which elevates a sad event into a mythic one. It may well be that the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, will assume that peculiar status accorded to the deaths of John F Kennedy and John Lennon: that everyone will remember where they were when they heard the news.

Certainly Britain seemed to come to a halt yesterday morning. Phone calls were made across the nation. There were tears at breakfast tables. Cars pulled over to the side of the road to listen to news bulletins on radio stations which had substituted sombre classical music for their usual pop. BBC Radio gave over Radios 2, 3, 4 and 5 to a simultaneous continuous news broadcast. Later in the day major sporting fixtures were cancelled or preceded by a two-minute silence. Politicians suspended campaigning on the Scottish and Welsh devolution votes, and the Prime Minister announced he was cancelling all engagements for today.

In part, it was a ghastly melodrama. There was a horrible apathy about the fast and brutal end to a life which had seemed to be lived like a fair-fetched Hollywood movie. She had lived by the media, and now had been killed by it. Surgeons opened the chest of the woman who had speculated at heart surgery and massaged her heart with their hands in a vain and desperate battle to save her. The woman whose fame was built upon her beauty had ended with her finely-honed body crushed – and yet Diana had emerged from the fatal car crash with her face almost unscathed.

But the welter of words which followed showed there was much more to it than that. The BBC radio presenters kept each interview mercifully short (unlike the cable TV people, who painfully milked their subjects to the point of mawkish embarrassment). In such situations, however, most questions appear crass. Yet though the odd tribute seemed perfunctory or formulaic, there was something

profoundly personal about most responses. John Major luminously spoke of Diana as "an imperishable icon". Tony Blair, Nelson Mandela and Bill Clinton were all clearly deeply moved by the death of this young woman.

For Diana was to the nation, it became clear, not a royal figurehead but a real person. "We all felt we had a psychic relationship with her," said the Queen's biographer Ben Pimlott. It was not just the recognisably modern world of baseball caps and leggings into which she had dragged the tweedy royals. Here was a warm woman who hugged people in need, took their hands and looked into their eyes. Though she had been denied comfort herself, she wanted to comfort others. She reached out from her vulnerability to others in pain, and made her vulnerability her strength, said the Archbishop of Canterbury. "She did everything from the heart," said her friend Rosa Monckton. "Her heart ruled her head, which is why I think she was so often misunderstood."

It is also why she was so readily, and often uncritically, loved – as was shown by the messages which members of the public left on flowers by royal residences. "Born a lady, became a princess, died a saint," said one. "The nation has thrown

away a jewel more precious than its whole empire," said another.

But perhaps hyperbole is only a sign that in these situations words are not enough. When the Royal Family arrived in a convoy of black cars at Crathie Church near Balmoral, some commentators spoke of them pulling together and putting on a brave face. That was wrong. What they did was not a duty so much as a refuge. At times of crisis, when emotions are raw and words are empty, there is consolation in ritual and solace in the repetition of the familiar words of the prayer: "We remember all those who, at this time, need to know your presence, all those whose lives are marked by tragedy and grief who need to know more than human comfort and friendship. We pray for our Queen and her family, and for the Prince of Wales and Prince William and Harry. May they be aware of your love. May they be sure of your love."

In our secular age, most people have lost their conscious understanding of this. Religion is a thing of the past. But the instinct remains. In part, the formula of media questions and answering tributes is a new such ritual. So is the urge by the public to find a tangible way of expressing their grief by turning up at a royal residence even if nobody is there. They need somewhere to go and any site will do.

So there were carpets of flowers laid at Diana's official residence, Kensington Palace, at the Prince of Wales's home at Highgrove, at Balmoral and at Holyroodhouse, as well as at the Spencer ancestral home, Althorp House in Northamptonshire. And people were not content to go when the flowers had been laid, but idly stood, in their hundreds, staring dumbly for hours on end.

Some eyebrows were raised pedantically over the playing of the national anthem, since Diana was not strictly speaking royal. But that ritual too – over shots of the Union flag fluttering defiantly at half-mast, or over a photograph of the Princess simply captioned with the dates 1961-1997

– spoke more eloquently than did photographs of the black Mercedes with its roof caved in near the Eiffel tower.

Yet there was a terrible ambivalence about it all. The female presenter on GMTV at 8am looked drawn and gently tear-stained, yet over the news the station showed fuzzy, snatched long-lens shots of Di and Dodi in a speedboat – the kind of photographs that caused the Princess so much pain in her life.

We should not pass judgement. We all consumed her: Diana craved our love as a self-validation; some of the public gave it, some of us merely showed mocking glee when she was caught by photographers visiting a psychiatrist in a helicopter. Only when something goes wrong does the British public become ashamed of its prurience and a collective feeling of shame ensue.

The ritual continues. After the shock comes the anger. "I would say that I always believed the press would kill her in the end," Charles Spencer told reporters gathered outside his home in South Africa. "But not even I could imagine that they would take such a direct hand in her death as seems to be the case ... It would appear that every proprietor and every editor of any publication that has paid for intrusive and exploitative photographs of her, encouraging greedy and ruthless individuals to risk everything in pursuit of Diana's image, has blood on his hands today."

He was not alone. Some photographers were forced to leave Kensington Palace yesterday because of public hostility. At Balmoral, one mourner shouted to reporters: "You as good as killed that poor woman. I hope you are proud of yourselves." And when journalists accompanying Prince Charles arrived at the hospital in Paris where the Princess died, patients and hospital staff jeered and shouted "murderers".

Next will come the row over press privacy. It will come to nothing. France has among the strongest privacy laws in the world, but Diana was a globalised commodity. It is said that the paparazzo who got the first Dodi and Di pic made £3m from it. The market rules. The politicians know that. But they know that yesterday was not the day to acknowledge it. Bill Clinton accepted as much when questioned on the need for tougher privacy laws. "I think it is better right now if we let a little time pass," he said, "let this event and the people involved be honoured and grieved. Let us respect the moment." On days such as yesterday, that is all anyone can do.

President Clinton seemed genuinely moved: "Let us respect the moment"

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Diana 1961-1997

Dia

The problem who wouldn't go quietly and died as a result of her fame

The life

Jojo Moyes

It would have been superfluous for any other brother to say: "I would ask you please at this time to respect the fact that Diana was part of a family." But so indelibly burned into global consciousness is the image of Diana, the most famous woman in the world, that it is hard to remember that it is private, as well as public property.

No woman in history has occupied such a hold on the public imagination — or prompted Dodi Fayed's such controversy — as the 19-year-old who grew up in public, parazzi seemingly shedding her skin as she went.

As Diana metamorphosed from innocent nursery nurse to reverend princess and mother, to couple wronged, vengeful woman, and, more recently, to confident campaigner, the one constant was her determination to be seen as just one "Queen of people's hearts", just one "her image as both a victim of and days as a benefactor of love". When Diana Spencer first

came to public attention, as a teenage kindergarten nanny, she was the perfect image of a Princess' virgin bride. Beautiful, shy and last before herself. "I'm thick as two yacht's short planks", she received a Italian's apturous welcome from a presumed utterance of the Windsors' aircraft. But when she married into that family, on 29 July 1981, the girl so shy that she would accept non-speaking parts in school plays was catapulted to Hotel he status of world superstar.

At her wedding, her increasingly glamorous appearance, and her birth of Prince William in one of 1982 added fuel to the fairy-tale myth that grew up around her, photo myth in which she appeared pointedly complicit. Diana became what the icon — of fashion, of the motherhood and of royalty. But by the birth of her second son, Harry, there were hints that the fairy-tale was becoming sour. The couple appeared increasingly separate and damaged reports about her and Prince Charles began to surface with increasing regularity.

Many of them apparently planted by their respective camps. The Princess began to look away, hurt and depressed, and reports of an eating disorder grew. She turned to a bewildering array of treatments, from psychology to colonic irrigation, prompting allegations that she was at the least self-indulgent, if not, and worst, unsound.

As speculation about her private life increased in intensity, Diana sought refuge in charity, an charitable role she cherished. One who met her spoke of her "magic touch" and her ability to connect, and realising that this was her greatest asset, she used it. She began to metamorphose into a self-styled ambassador for compassion, on the goodwill of ordinary people.

The transition wasn't easy. In interview, she told how once Charles had told her to speak to a crowd during her first walkabouts, and she had replied: "I can't. I can't." The fear of it, she said, "practically finished me off" and then "I did it".

By the age of 24, Diana's affair with the public had become known and she had become patron of 18 charities. Her roles, such as her work with AIDS organisations, proved controversial. Her urging of "Aids for life" for sufferers of illness was seen as simplistic, and her appearances at hospital beds have been seen as a cynical ploy, but she was also widely

held the Royal Affairs Correspondent

Death of Diana, Princess of Wales, lifts her to the status of other icons such as John F. Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, James Dean whose immortality was assured by the tragic circumstances of their deaths. The news spread yesterday, we're making comparisons with the shock of the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, which sent ripples round the world, and invade the public consciousness in such a way, an icon that has been a dazzling and controversial character, who sought to enhance others in some way and then had life cut short. Then he grew up, surrounding his life and their death, her hold on public consciousness perhaps the figures the Princess most closely re-

praised for having broken down the barriers of ignorance. Her determination to represent even unpopular causes suggested she would go where her conscience drove her.

The love affair was not always reciprocated. As her marriage collapsed, so, temporarily, did her public image and she, like Prince Charles, was dogged by rumour and scandal. The infamous secretly-recorded "Squidgygate" tapes revealed intimate conversations between her and confidante James Gilbey, in which she discussed her unhappy marriage.

With the tapes, and the publication of Andrew Morton's book, *Diana: Her True Story*, the fairy-tale was finally revealed for the myth it was. Diana, the book said, had tried to commit suicide five times and had, mutilated

She became a far more complex and interesting character than the one dimensional fairy princess,

herself out of frustration at her unhappy marriage.

Perhaps because of her iconic status, there was an initial unwillingness to believe the book's horrific claims. The Press Complaints Commission, for example, condemned the claims as "an odious exhibition of journalists dabbling their fingers in the stuff of other people's souls". But the claims were given credence when Diana chose to publicly visit friends who were quoted in the book, suggesting she had sanctioned the revelations. This prompted a backlash: The then prime minister, John Major, for example, made it clear that he would not be able to facilitate a dignified departure from the Royal Family for Diana if she "continued to manipulate the press".

If the myth was ended, the public's fascination with her had not. Diana became something new: the manipulative, wronged woman, a far more complex and interesting character than a one-dimensional fairy princess. Her image was made all the more potent by the fact that she rarely spoke, and subsequently every gesture was analysed for clues.

In the same way that she had once used press photographers to illustrate her state of mind, Diana began to use her charity work to express herself, dropping broad hints about everything from marriage problems to the "self-revolution" of the bulimic.

Such selective revelations made it difficult for her simultaneously to complain about the increasingly intrusive nature of her press coverage, and in late 1993, as she became an increasingly marginalised and criticised figure, she made the tearful announcement that she was to drop out of public life and focus on her two sons. This self-imposed exile did

not last long. After Charles admitted publicly to having been unfaithful to her during their marriage, the gloves apparently came off, and Diana pulled off one of the most astonishing television coups ever seen.

In an interview with the BBC programme *Panorama*, Diana destroyed every remaining vestige of a Royal marriage that never was. Her quote about Charles' mistress — "There were three in this marriage — it was crowded", and her admission that she had had an affair with guardsman James Hewitt, caused shockwaves throughout the nation.

This vengeful Diana was dangerous, a fact she herself acknowledged. "I was a problem, I was a liability, and how are we going to deal with her. This hasn't happened before," she said of the "Establishment's" reaction to her. "She won't go quietly, that's the problem. I'll fight to the end."

Her hints of a conspiracy against her, she acknowledged, drew claims that she was unstable; a view seemingly validated by the reaction of Conservative MP Nicholas Soames, a former equerry to Prince Charles, who famously accused her of being in the "advanced stages of paranoia".

With that interview, the Princess's confidence grew.

Likewise, her whole image changed. The nervous young Princess transformed herself through intensive workouts into a sleek, visibly strong Amazon.



1980: The first press image. Lady Diana Spencer at the kindergarten where she worked in London



1981: The kiss. On the balcony of Buckingham Palace following her wedding to the Prince of Wales



1985: Dancing with the actor John Travolta at the Reagan White House



1982: Happy days with Charles and Prince William



1992: With Harry and William at Alton Towers



1995: The outspoken Panorama interview



1996: Leaving a reception for the English National Ballet on the day of her divorce from the Prince of Wales



1997: On holiday in July with her friend Dodi Fayed, who died in the car crash with her yesterday



1995: Arriving at the Serpentine Gallery, London, in shoulder cocktail dress by Christina Stambolian for a dinner given by *Vanity Fair* magazine on the evening the Prince of Wales gave a personal television interview to his biographer Jonathan Dimbleby

At her best not with baubles but dressed down like a modern woman

The style

Tamsin Blanchard
Fashion Editor

When British *Vogue* featured the Princess of Wales on the cover of the magazine in July 1994, who could resist the black and white portrait by Patrick Demarchelier and the simple cover line: "Happy Birthday The Princess of Wales. New Portrait".

Here was Diana, aged 33, with the sad but smiling eyes, with the beginnings of a few crow's feet. Other celebrities would have insisted that every line or crease was retouched to a smooth glow. But not Diana. That was the essence of her style. Here was a woman at the pinnacle of beauty and glamour, a *Vogue* cover girl; yet every woman could relate to those small wrinkles. She was not super-humanly perfect. She always looked real and approachable.

Diana's style was a natural one. She was just as at home in a couture ball gown at a state ceremony as she was in her gym kit, or with windswept hair and bullet-proof waistcoat on the minefields of Angola. Her style evolved slowly from the days of her engagement to be married when she wore the frumpy pie-crust frills of a teenage Sloane Ranger. The Emanuel wedding dress was that of a fairytale princess and was the start of one of many close relationships with British designers.

That was also the point at which she inspired other women to dress like her. The style of that wedding dress, give or take a few metres off the train, was imitated by brides across the world. Over the years, women have copied the Diana hair, slicking it back when she slicked hers and hiding under their fringes when she did the same. One particular hairstyle in February 1995 dominated every tabloid front page. The papers didn't like it. The style was not feminine enough. But women rushed out to buy a tube of hairslick to try it for themselves.

Unlike Jackie Onassis, who led trends and was at the forefront of fashion in the Sixties, Diana was a staunch classicist. She stuck to her own wide-shouldered suits, the sapphire and diamond earrings, the evening frocks that often made her look old before her time, and the matching shoes and bag. Even her make-up – the slightly smudgy eyeliner and the natural lips – remained the same throughout the years.

She was not a woman at fashion's cutting edge as her recent charity sale of eighty dresses at Christie's in New York highlighted. Some of the dresses were ruched and gathered to the point of monstrosity. Others, like one embroidered ballerina dress, were simply cut to an unfattering length.

However unfortunate the style of dress, it was the woman beneath the drapes and ruching that always shone through. She was the sort of woman who could wear a sack and still looked fabulous. No wonder designers fantasised about dressing Di. She had everything – the height, the even features, the legs and those well-toned, statuesque shoulders worthy of any supermodel.

As well as supporting British designers such as Elizabeth Emanuel, Zandra Rhodes, Bruce Oldfield and Catherine Walker, Diana was also courted by designers including the late Gianni Versace whose memorial service she attended in July, and by Bernard Arnault, the owner of luxury goods conglomerate LVMH.

It was he who persuaded the Princess to wear the first-ever dress for Christian Dior by John Galliano last December. No other woman had the power to generate so many front pages across the world for the sake of one navy dress. She could not do anything to her appearance without com-

ment from the newspapers. She was every designer's dream.

"Perhaps one day she'll come to me," Vivienne Westwood told *Woman and Home* magazine in 1995. "You'd see some results. I could make her the most stylish woman in the world." Westwood had criticised the Princess for being "ruled by trends". She said: "It's as though her clothes are supposed to tell you she's both a feminist and sexy at the same time. It's a compromise – and it doesn't work."

It was precisely the fact that she was a woman trying to control her own life, acknowledging her position as a role model to other women, whilst not being afraid to wear a one-shoulder dress or a skirt split high up the thigh that made Diana so alluring. Nobody was pulling her strings either in her choice of dress or the way she chose to lead her life.

Beyond her strong physique was her own personality that no amount of money or plastic surgery could buy. Tall, slim, and graceful, she could carry off whatever she wore. She also knew how to be photographed. From the early days when she could barely lift her kindergarten teacher chin high enough for cameras to see her face, she became as skilled as a movie star or fashion model at loving the camera lens and making it love her.

As well as two covers for British *Vogue* – both in aid of promoting charities – and one for American *Vogue* when the journalist Georgina Howell followed Diana on a Red Cross trip to Kathmandu, and another for *Harper's Bazaar*, Diana's most recent cover was for *Vanity Fair* in July.

The photographs showed a woman relaxed, warm and at ease with the camera, laughing flirtatiously with the fashion photographer Mario Testino. And as usual, Diana was using her style and her image, not only as the mother of the future King of England and tireless charity worker, but that of Diana as fashion and lifestyle celebrity, to promote the sale of her dresses at Christie's.

She was only too aware of the power of a set of portraits. Proceeds of the non-profit making sale went to Aids Crisis Trust, The Royal Marsden Hospital Cancer Fund and other related charities in America.

Diana's style was at its best when, such as those *Vanity Fair* pictures, she was at her most relaxed natural and dressed down. She suited nothing better than a pair of jeans and crisp man's white shirt. How thoroughly modern of her to own around thirty pairs of jeans – Rive Ozeki, Armani, Levi's, Versace as well as good old traditional Levi's were among the labels on the waistbands.

The key to her style was not baubles, spangles and big frocks. It was the pared-down style of the modern career woman at mother of two that made her stand out. Hers were the sort of clothes that every woman could relate to – and in fact wore in day-to-day life.

Days out with her son would be spent in a sweatshirt, jeans and baseball cap. One of the most striking images of Diana in her aerobics gear route from the gym shorts and a sweatshirt.

The most recent picture of Diana on holiday showed a tanned woman in vest and jeans shorts or with her hair pushed into a baseball cap. Like everyone, she could be a bad hair day and hide it under a cap.

Diana's true style only began to come into own over the past four years, since the separation from Charles. She asserted her independence by moving away from frills and flounces and a cleaner, sharper more contemporary way dressing.

However, it is the woman within, rather than the clothes she wore, that will always stand through.



1997: Outside her gym in Earl's Court, west London, in sweatshirt and Lycra shorts



1997: In white one-shouldered evening dress by Versace; shot by Mario Testino for July *Vanity Fair*

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obituaries / gazette

Di

Diana, Princess of Wales

The 20th century will have many symbols. Few however will be as potent as Diana, Princess of Wales. In a sense she was the ultimate product of the age of celebrity, sought after as no other for celebrity's ephemeral trappings of elegance, beauty, and high fashion, all lent especial allure by the life-long role that fate had thrust upon her, as mother of a future British monarch.

She was a peculiarly bewitching blend: the public goddess who in private knew more misery than joy, a figure as far removed from the serious business of high politics as it is possible to imagine, yet a person who would become an extraordinary ambassador for her country. In many respects her life was a happening – but one which may yet exert greater impact on Britain than a clutch of the weightiest public dignitaries of our time.

Diana Frances Spencer was born in the late afternoon of 1 July 1961 at Park House on the royal estate of Sandringham, the third daughter of Viscount and Viscountess Althorp. For her parents, initially, she was something of a disappointment: they had yearned for a son to keep alive the Spencer name, close to the English court for more than four centuries. But that omission would be soon put right with the arrival three years later of a baby brother Charles, and for a while at least every condition of an idyllic early childhood was in place.

A quick glance through Diana Spencer's lineage of landowners and royal servants – her paternal grandmother Countess Spencer was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother; the late Earl Spencer served as equerry to both King George VI and the present Queen – gives only a partial picture of her background. The Spencer collection at Althorp is famous for the copiousness of its family correspondence and archive. But on both her mother's and her father's side there was also a strong literary and particularly a musical bent, which gives a telling gloss to one of the first iconic images of Diana, Princess of Wales: when she sat at a piano during a royal tour of Australia and, unabashed, played some bars of Rachmaninov.

Ruth Fermoy, Diana's maternal grandmother, was a lady-in-waiting to the Queen Mother (the public face of the family) but also a concert pianist and founder of the King's Lynn music festival. Lady Fermoy also set up with the Prince of Wales in 1989 a church restoration charity, Music in Country Churches, whose fund-raising through concerts, is continued today by the Prince and by Diana's sister Lady Jane Fellowes. On her father's side there was a strong tradition of amateur music, played at the highest level. Her grandfather Jack Spencer, the 7th Earl Spencer, a considerable connoisseur of art and architecture, was the son of Margaret Baring, a first-rate amateur violinist and brother of the novelist Maurice Baring who grew up in a house where Clara Schumann and other instrumentalists of the day played at private concerts, and whose Stradivarius was until recently in the family collection. Jack Spencer's sister, Margaret Douglas Home, inherited her mother's musical gene, was a fine pianist and founded in 1974 the Burnham Market Festival, in Norfolk.

Margaret Douglas Home died last year aged 90, kept alive for the younger generation of Spencers not only the family music tradition, but also the literary one. She was especially anxious when Diana married the Prince of Wales that he should be given a complete set

series of royal girlfriends: "I was always paired off with Andrew," Diana would say later in jest, before everything went wrong. But, almost without realising, Charles grew enchanted by the gay and unaffected younger sister who was turning into a beautiful and captivating young woman before his eyes.

It was an improbable courtship, but one whose timing could not have been bettered. At the age of 30, Charles was under intense pressure from both the public and his parents to find a future queen. Diana fitted the bill perfectly. She was gorgeous, and in the famous words of her uncle, Lord Fermoy, a "bona fide virgin". Though she would loathe the inevitable, intrusive pursuit of the couple by Fleet Street, culminating in the leak of their official engagement to the Times 24 hours in advance, the distress was outweighed by love, and the national outpouring of rejoicing which followed.

"My Shy Di," trumpeted the tabloids, as Charles introduced his 19-year-old Prince to the world. The marriage itself on 29 July 1981 truly seemed to crown an ultimate late-20th-century fairytale, a union made in heaven and sealed in picture-perfect splendour and pageantry before the congregation in St Paul's Cathedral, and hundreds of millions rapt in front of television screens across the world. Least touching was the pride of Johnnie Spencer as he gave away the daughter he so adored.



Diana, Princess of Wales: the public goddess who in private knew more misery than joy; far removed from politics yet an extraordinary ambassador for Britain. Photograph: John Stillwell / PA

Charles's fitness to be king – was regarded as a masterpiece. Maybe she was a manipulator, a strange blend of the trusting, the calculating and the flaky, but she was forgiven the bulk of her sins. If anyone was to blame for the marriage's failure, the public concluded, it was Charles. She, not he, came across as the doting parent. His confession of the Camilla affair to David Dimbleby in an earlier television interview was by contrast seen as a disaster.

More important, and in contrast to Charles, she found a genuine niche for herself on the British and international stage. By now, of course, Diana was the probably the most famous, and certainly the most photographed, woman in the world. The pressure was literally unending: the public appetite for news about her insatiable, the going price for a titillating photo to exclusive running into six figures or more. In the pyramid of world celebrity, she occupied the very pinnacle. Long before yesterday's tragedy, there had been high speed car chases, pleas for privacy invariably ignored, and angry scenes between hunter and hunted. Sometimes Diana would bring trouble on herself, by first excommunicating her tormentors, only to approach them herself to volunteer some confidence.

But the picture projected was the one she intended, of a woman who had discovered herself. Although mother of the future king, she herself would never be queen. But she said, she hoped to be "a queen in people's hearts". She devoted much time to charitable and humanitarian work, travelling the world and working with figures like Mother Teresa, AIDS, leprosy, cancer, and most recently the abolition of landmines were just some of the issues she championed; her name a guarantee of prominence that no other could match, her mere presence at a premiere worth £100,000 or more to the fortunate charity involved. Whether at a vagrant's shelter or the White House, Diana automatically topped the bill. Britain, and certainly the Royal Family, had never seen anything like it.

The finalisation of her divorce

on 28 August 1996 only enhanced the sense of liberation.

Finally she seemed to achieve a balance between the understanding of how celebrity might be harnessed to the causes she cherished, and her personal happiness. Her friendship with Dodi Fayed, son of the controversial owner of Harrods and benefactor of sundry Tory MPs, might arouse conflicting emotions within the British establishment. But shitting through the blurry photo-lens images from the Mediterranean these last few weeks was a personal joy which she did not attempt to conceal.

By the end too, she was casting off the political shackles too, vouchsafing to the French newspaper *Le Monde* her opinion that the previous Conservative Government had been "hopeless" in its refusal to ban landmines.

Nothing however could entirely remove the distortions imposed by the relentless, white-hot glare of publicity. First to some British tabloids, and then to *Le Monde*, she spoke of her desire to live abroad. "Any sane person would have left long ago. But I cannot. I have my sons." Diana, as she realised better than anyone, was trapped – by her immediate pursuers in the media, by the establishment which had made her, and by her own imperfections.

In such circumstances, perhaps only a superhuman could have withstood the pressures. Diana, Princess of Wales however was still too human. Had she married a country squire instead of a future king, the tragedy early yesterday in an underpass by the Seine would have merited no more than a line in the society pages. Instead, her appallingly premature, and utterly needless death will have repercussions on Britain, its institutions and the way the country sees itself for very many years to come.

Rupert Cornwell

Diana Frances Spencer: born 1 July 1961; married 1981 The Prince of Wales (two sons; marriage dissolved 1994); died Paris 31 August 1997.

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He would die in 1992, as her pregnancy publicly unravelled. For Diana it was a devastating blow. In fact, this was a union that should have never been made. From its outset the living shade of Camilla Parker Bowles, a former girlfriend of Prince Charles, peered over its shoulder. Once giddy first love wore off, the couple discovered they had virtually nothing in common. Charles was cerebral, staid and deeply traditional, a man who often found it hard to communicate his feelings. She was half a generation younger, outgoing, impulsive, a lover of pop music, nightclubs and noise, who found the Palace and its ways heartless and oppressive. Like others after her, most notably of course Sarah Ferguson, she was a natural addition to the household. The couple had gained during the pregnancy. Nonetheless, compared with what was to follow, these were good times. Charles was besotted with his son. For a while at least, the couple had an interest in common.

The high-point perhaps came in early 1983 with a highly successful six-week tour of New Zealand and of an already Republican-leaning Australia. In breach of every royal precedent that an heir and his heir should never travel together, the Queen bowed to Diana's wishes and permitted William to accompany them. The schedule was exhausting, but the reception exhilarating. Astonishingly, public interest in the Princess, instead of ebbing after her marriage as she and everyone else expected, only grew. Her clothes, her hair styles, her every trivial utterance were of obsessive interest. Her wardrobe cost a fortune, but as a clothes-horse for British designers, she was a national asset. In desperation, she threatened to take her own life.

Charles, apparently, accused her of crying wolf and got ready to go riding. "She was as good as her word," her biographer continues. "Standing on top of the wooden staircase, she hurried to the ground, landing in a heap at the bottom."

And, it transpired, she did indeed suffer from anorexia and bulimia. Morton depicted a marriage made not in heaven but hell, fought out between competing circles of courtiers against the background of Charles' friendship with Camilla and Diana's own, retaliatory, association with James Gilbey. Five months after the

book appeared John Major, to the surprise of absolutely no one, informed Parliament that the couple were separating.

But in 11 years, Diana had been transformed. The naive child-woman clothed in puppy fat had turned into the global epitome of high fashion, elegance and sophistication. She still hated the press, but she had learnt how to use it for her own ends. As her marriage crumbled, and then the end of her life, she almost always bested Charles in a duel for public opinion that would shake the Royal Family to its foundations. The Queen referred to 1992 as her *annus horribilis*; if anything yet more awful years lay ahead for the monarchy, and unending cascade of revelations, memoirs, leaks and plundered tapes, in which no stone was to intimate to leave unturned.

The clear victor however was Diana. When she and Charles were together, it was upon her the cameras and the attention lingered. When they separated, public sympathy stayed largely on her side. Anna Pasternak's *Princess in Love* (1994), which revealed her long affair with the cavalry officer James Hewitt, brought opprobrium only on Hewitt. Her BBC television interview on *Panorama* in November 1995 – of which she gave neither the Queen nor her own personal advisers any warning, and in which she admitted her adultery, criticised the Royal Family for its lack of support for her, and cast aspersions on

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Ad watchdog washes its hands of Demon Eyes

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

The Advertising Standards Authority looks set to wash its hands of controversial political advertising such as the Conservatives' "demon eyes" poster attack on Tony Blair.

The Committee on Advertising Practice (CAP), which sets the rules by which the Advertising Standards Authority polices advertising campaigns, is considering a plan to label political adverts "propa-

ganda out of the bounds of regulation".

At present political advertising is covered by the ASA for matters of taste and decency and the privacy of individuals. But they are not bound to the same rules of honesty and truthful presentation as commercial advertisers.

The CAP is unhappy with this "half-way house" arrangement because it feels political advertising is discrediting the reputation of advertising as a whole. It is considering whether to

include political parties in all of its regulations or consider it as pure propaganda bound by no rules.

Insiders believe it is unlikely the committee will take the regulatory option because it does not want to take responsibility for judging whether a political party is telling the truth.

"We are an unelected body and have no desire to become involved in the democratic process," said Caroline Crawford, a director of the ASA. "Can you imagine the situation

if during the course of an election we are asked to adjudicate on an advertisement on a matter of truthfulness? Say it takes a week for us to judge on it and in the meantime the party making the false claim wins the election. Are we then to rule that they lied their way into power?"

Last year the ASA ruled against the "demon eyes" press ad created by M & C Saatchi after it received 130 complaints from Labour Party members and church groups. It was able to censure the ad under its pri-

vacy regulations because it portrayed Mr Blair as "sinister and dishonest" and because his permission had not been sought for the ad. At the same time it rejected complaints that the ad was offensive because it attributed satanic qualities to Mr Blair.

However the ASA is known to be worried that other complaints—such as the one that the Conservative Party made against a "Same old Tories. Same old lies" poster by the Labour Party—were made in or-

der to garner publicity and cast a shadow over an advert rather than because they honestly expected the poster to be banned.

All the major political parties are being consulted about a change in the regulations, but the last time they were consulted, in 1992, the ASA was unable to get them to reach a consensus. The review of political advertising regulations is being accompanied by a review of the rules covering the use of members of the Royal Family without their permission.



Seeing red: The Tories' controversial election poster

Families angry at Saudi 'sentence'

Ian Burrell

The families of two British nurses facing possible execution in Saudi Arabia have reacted angrily to a frenzy of speculation yesterday that one of the women had been convicted and faced being beheaded.

Reports, quoting unnamed sources in Dubai, claimed that Deborah Parry, 38, who was born in Nottingham, had been given the death sentence for the murder of her Australian colleague Yvonne Gilford.

Associated Press claimed that Lucille McLaughlin, 31, from Dundee, had been cleared of murder but found guilty of being an accessory to murder.

The Foreign Office moved quickly to say that it had "no information" that any such decisions had been made.

Relatives of both Gilford and the British nurses also expressed bewilderment.

Frank Gilford, the brother of the dead nurse, who has suggested that he would seek the death penalty if the British nurses were found guilty, described the reported development as a "non-event". He said: "I have still not heard anything from Saudi Arabia. I have no confirmation on any of the stories floating around the countryside."

The British families were clearly upset by the rumours. Jack Irvine, a spokesman for the families, said: "It is clearly very, very distressing to the relatives."

"If you were the parent or relative of someone in a Saudi jail and they were possibly about to be beheaded wouldn't you be distressed?"

"We have been getting this every weekend for the last three weeks. The same story. When it is checked out it appears to be untrue."

The Foreign Office said that, as far as it was aware, no decision had been made.

"Our situation is that we have also made inquiries and the senior officials to whom we spoke said that they had no information on a judgment being issued or a verdict and sentence handed out," said a spokesman.

Officials said they did not believe that information was being withheld from the British authorities.

"But their judiciary is independent of the government so we are not to know the ramifications any more than we would know [the private deliberations] of the higher courts in this country," he added. "We would expect that the first people to be told would



Frank Gilford has rubbish reports that one of the nurses charged with murdering his sister has been sentenced to death. Photograph: Matt Turner

be the lawyers on both sides."

It has been confirmed that papers from the case were submitted to a higher court in Riyadh last Saturday [August 23]. Sources have speculated that this indicates that a decision has been made and sent for approval.

But according to Salah al-Hajj, the nurses' Saudi lawyer:

"The documents of the case were submitted to a higher court in Riyadh last Saturday [August 23]. [and] did not give a judgement of any kind."

Mr Hajj said the documents submitted dealt with issues such as the nurses' alleged confessions and the Gilford family's insistence on the death

penalty, and the higher court would now review the evidence and determine the credibility of the confessions.

The Dubai-sourced reports claimed that a three-judge panel had issued its verdict on 17 August, but had not released it publicly. An appeals court in Riyadh is reviewing the case as

part of a mandatory appeals process that could last months or even years, it was claimed.

Verdicts issued by Saudi courts are not always immediately released publicly and court hearings are closed to reporters.

The Australian nurse was found murdered in December

in her room at the King Fahd medical complex in the Saudi city of Dhahran. She had been stabbed, bludgeoned and suffocated.

Ms Parry and Ms McLaughlin say they are innocent of the murder and have withdrawn their confessions which they say were made under duress.

MI5 exposé tapes refused

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Whitehall sources yesterday attacked the gross irresponsibility of the *Mail on Sunday* for its refusal to give advance notice of further revelations to be made by David Shayler, a former MI5 agent. The newspaper spurned a proposal from Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, that it should tell officials what disclosures were going to be made.

A government source said they had wanted to know whether any material contained in the second instalment of Mr Shayler's exposé would be damaging, and the source protested that Jonathan Holborow, editor of the *Mail on Sunday*, was not the best judge of that.

In the event, Mr Holborow refused to co-operate, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, won a High Court injunction preventing the newspaper from carrying further disclosures.

Mr Straw claimed that "serious harm" had already been caused by last week's *Mail on Sunday* report of Mr Shayler's inside knowledge about the working of the Security Service. There was particular concern about an operation in which money was tracked from Libyan sources to the bank account of a senior *Guardian* journalist, used to finance a libel action against *The Independent* newspaper.

But the High Court judge who granted the application for an emergency injunction refused a government request for the *Mail on Sunday* to hand over all the tapes of its interviews with Mr Shayler.

Under the new Official Secrets Act any person who is or has been a member of the security and intelligence services "is guilty of an offence if with out lawful authority he discloses any information ... which is or has been in his possession by virtue of his position as a member of any of those services".

In the case of a newspaper publishing that information the disclosure has to be damaging and it has to be published "knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that it would be damaging". As the dispute between Mr Campbell and Mr Holborow shows, "damage means different things to different people, but the High Court judge sided with the Government on Saturday night".

Trees to clean up wasteland

Poison-eating trees are being developed to help clean up Britain's industrial wasteland blighted by toxic pollutants.

Some of the first sites pointed for "bio-remediation" are currently so toxic that no one entering them has to wear a full protective suit, face mask and breathing equipment.

Under the "green-tech" project the trees are to be used absorb from the soil pollutant like lead, cadmium, mercury, zinc and boron. The trees would then be felled to enable the land to be utilised. Pines, willow, poplar and alder have already been planted in Black Country to identify most effective species.

The "clean-earth" project has been launched by the Wolverhampton-based National Urban Forestry Unit, which has picked three sites near the M6 motorway, in the heavy industrial belt for mass planting as part of Black Country Urban Forest (BCUF), a £10m Millennium programme to improve the quality of life in the West Midlands. Two million trees will be planted in the UK's most ambitious "greening" programme.

Ministers faced with immigration appeals crisis

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

A flood of complaints about immigration cases is reaching some Labour MPs, largely prompted by hopes that the Blair Government will be more sympathetic than the Tories, ministers have been warned.

Some Labour MPs have told ministers that they have been besieged by constituents whose relatives have been refused en-

try to Britain, in the hope of receiving help.

However, several Labour MPs have told *The Independent* that the number of refusals has gone up. Some believe British citizens abroad are overcompensating for Labour's abolition of the "primary purpose" rule stop couples marrying solely for the purpose of settling in Britain.

It has also been suggested that the problem might be the fall-

out from a major drive, just before the general election, to deal with a backlog of immigration cases.

All agree that new MPs' inexperience may have exacerbated the backlog, with letters going to the wrong departments and having to be forwarded.

The Foreign Office minister, Baroness Symons, has been forced to write to all MPs about the crisis. She also plans a fact-finding trip to Islamabad, where a computer failure has been

causing delays for months, and to New Delhi.

The unit deals with MP's representations on visa refusals. Its officials believe the backlog has been caused by relatives in this country making new appeals on old cases, in the hope that Labour will be more sympathetic than the Tories.

Baroness Symons told *The Independent* in her letter that she planned to give "careful thought" to a number of problems and to write again spelling out her

plans to tackle them in the medium and long term.

She told *The Independent*: "We are continuing to monitor daily the performance of our correspondence unit and are working urgently to improve matters."

However, some experienced Labour MPs are angry about the way the issue is being handled. One said he had spoken to a minister who had complained he could not cross the Lobby of

the House of Commons without being approached by half a dozen concerned MPs.

"I think the central problem is with our entry clearance officers and their training and culture. I hesitate to say there is a racist culture but it is hard to avoid that conclusion," said one MP, who did not want to be named. "It's almost as if they are sifting cases by knocking them back and saying the genuine ones will reapply."

Fill her up – with a few gallons of fresh air

Kate Watson-Smyth

It may look little old-fashioned, but this Citroen 2CV is in fact one of the most modern vehicles of the 20th century. The electronic car is a specially adapted vehicle which can be charged up by the wind.

It is currently touring Cornwall in what is believed to be the first practical demonstration in the country of pollution-free motoring.

The Engel-Burger family (right), from Germany, which owns the car and has come to Britain on a touring holiday, wanted to demonstrate how to travel by car without damaging the environment.

Powered by nine batteries, they drove to Delabole wind farm, Cornwall, to charge the car overnight from one of the 10,400 turbines before travelling up to 60 miles a day, visiting places of interest in Cornwall.

The Delabole wind farm, which was the first in the country, came on-line in 1991 and now produces 10 million kWh per year.

Peter Edwards, managing director of Windelectric, the operator of the farm, said:

"Our turbines are small by

modern standards. The newest, being installed on the continent, are 1.5MW, nearly four times as powerful.

"With turbines being constructed alongside German autobahns, wind turbines could become an increasingly common sight as we find a solution to emission-free motoring."

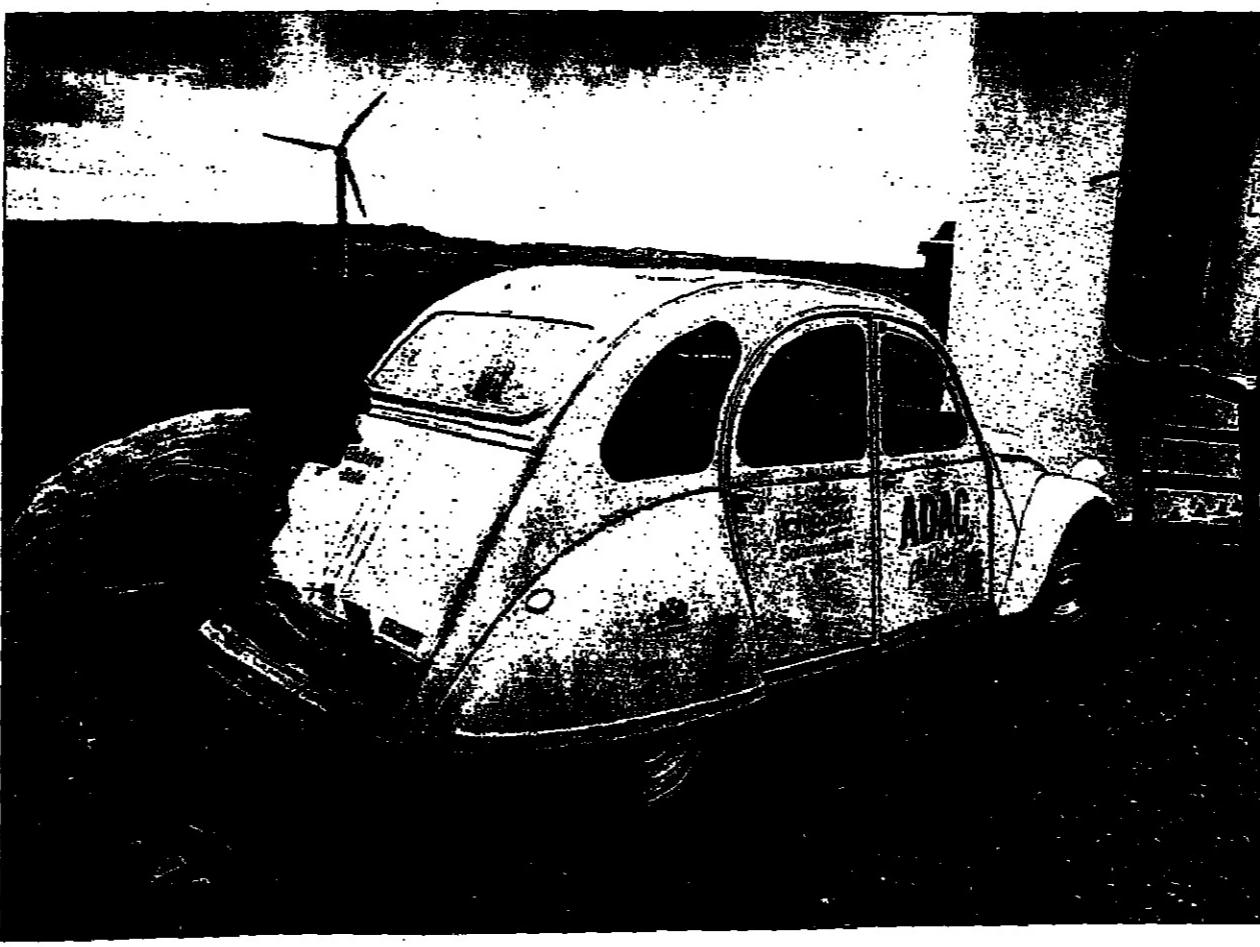
Nick Goodall, chief executive of the British Wind Energy Association, said: "With the UK the windiest country in Europe, the prospect of being able to enjoy the car without the guilt of pollution is looking very good."

"However, if we don't see planning consent granted for wind farms, the prospects for zero emissions will take a giant step backwards."

There are around 40 wind farms in Britain, most of which are in relatively remote areas.

However, despite the claims that wind power is the most environmentally friendly way to produce energy, many environmentalists have complained that the ugly turbines across the horizon is equally damaging to the landscape.

Photograph: Paul Stalter



international

West turns up heat on Serb hardliners

Andrew Marshall
and agencies

The West has increased the pressure on Bosnian Serb hardliners over the weekend, following clashes last week with NATO troops.

On Saturday, the United States special envoy, Robert Gelbard, accused hard-line supporters of wartime leader Radovan Karadzic of instigating the violence, and criticised them for using women and chil-

dren as shields for rock-throwing demonstrators.

Mr Gelbard, on a one-day visit to shore up the crumbling Dayton peace accords and stem mounting violence that has included attacks on US soldiers, gave measured support to the more moderate Bosnian Serb leader, Biljana Plavšić, but heaped scorn on her hardline rivals. He said the backers of the indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic had impoverished the Bosnian Serb people, whose

economy was wrecked during the 43-month-long Bosnian civil war.

"I warned him in the most serious terms that there is a need right now to change his behaviour," Mr Gelbard said after he met Momcilo Krajisnik, a top Karadzic aide. "The consequences will be the most serious imaginable," he added.

Mr Krajisnik hit back at Mr Gelbard. "We took Gelbard's message very seriously, but we don't accept threats," he said.

The Bosnian Serbs' embattled President Plavšić met the US administrator of Brcko, where intra-Serb tensions sparked attacks against US peacekeeping troops three days ago. After speaking with the administrator, Robert Farrand, for two hours, Mrs Plavšić condemned her hard-line rivals for "putting women and children in the front line ... which is beyond every moral norm".

Mrs Plavšić controls the western section of Serbian territo-

ry in Bosnia from her base in Banja Luka, while Mr Karadzic controls the east from Pale, near the capital, Sarajevo. The peace force and other international representatives in Bosnia have sided increasingly with Mrs Plavšić.

Clashes erupted in Brcko after US soldiers serving with the NATO peace mission moved to maintain order after learning that Mrs Plavšić's forces were planning to seize police stations and media outlets controlled by her rivals. Mr Farrand criticised local radio in Brcko for instigating Thursday's violence.

The North Atlantic Council, NATO's policymaking body, said on Saturday that Nato-led troops in Bosnia "would not tolerate the use of force or intimidation" and promised to shut down any media inciting violence.

The council met in special session late on Saturday to consider the developing situation in the Serb part of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Nato Secretary-General Javier Solana said that allied peacekeeping troops would use force, if needed, to shut down Bosnian Serb media outlets that urge violence against peacekeepers.

President Plavšić warned that the hardliners would face punishment when the power struggle in Bosnian Serb territory was over. "Their biggest punishment would be their conscience, if they had one," she said during a television programme on Sat-

urday night. "Since they do not have one, they will be punished once all this over."

The West, together with Mrs Plavšić, have been gradually wresting power from the hardliners in the west of the republic, including putting Plavšić loyalists in charge of police stations. They also have been taking control of the state-run television network, which previously broadcast only news programmes put together by the hardline-run studios in Pale.

Muslim leader urges Algeria truce

Paris (Reuters) — The leader of Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front has called for an immediate halt to the bloodshed in the North African country as preliminary step towards dialogue with the authorities.

In a brief letter to the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Abassi Madani said: "In respect to your appeal on Algerians for dialogue and reconciliation ... I am ready to call for an immediate halt to bloodshed."

Between 100 and 300 people were killed overnight on Thursday and Friday in the worst of a series of massacres of civilians in recent weeks. The authorities have blamed Muslim rebels for the atrocity.

About 60,000 people have been killed since January 1992, when the authorities scrapped a general election dominated by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Mr Madani, who is in the Algerian capital Algiers, said his appeal would be "a preliminary step for a serious dialogue ... to find a happy end to the crisis".

The letter, written in classical Arabic, was signed by his son, Abbas Salman, in the name of his father. It had no FIS stamp and could not immediately be authenticated.

The FIS leader, recently released from prison where he spent six years, said his move was motivated by "the deterioration of the situation in Algeria and mass massacres which targeted Algerian people".

Mr Madani's letter was not mentioned by Algerian state-run media, including the APS news agency.

The UN chief on Saturday told a news conference that words of condemnation would not be enough. "It will be necessary to go beyond that, quietly and discreetly," he said. "I hope we will find ways and means of encouraging the parties to cease violence."

"The killing has gone on far too long," said Mr Annan, who was attending the Venice film festival where a UN film, *Footsteps to a War*, was on show.

Pope John Paul yesterday also condemned the massacres. My thoughts turn to the martyred Algeria, where news of unceasing hit so many innocent people, continues to reach us," he told pilgrims from his summer residence south of Rome in a regular Sunday address.

"May God touch the heart of those involved in these massacres, in order that there may be an end to such an unjustifiable spiral of violence and the country may find again the peace it desires," he added.



Blazing a trail: A 50ft-effigy dominating the skyline at the annual Burning Man festival in the Nevada desert. The festival for "free-spirited people" is described as "Mad Max meets Woodstock" and drew 20,000 people over the weekend

Photograph: David Ake/Reuters

Egypt jails Israeli 'spy' for 15 years



Behind bars: Azam Azam in a security cage at court

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

An Egyptian state security court in Cairo yesterday sentenced an Israeli Arab to 15 years' hard labour for spying in Egypt on behalf of Israeli intelligence. The case brings Israeli-Egyptian relations to their lowest level since the peace treaty between the two countries was signed in 1979.

Azam Azam, an Israeli-Arab belonging to the Druze sect, was convicted of working as a spy when he was employed in a textile plant in Egypt. He was accused of planning to send back information written on invisible

ink on items of lingerie made in the factory.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, protested by telephone to Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian president, that Mr Azam was innocent and said that the verdict was "an outrage". Mr Azam's lawyer said that his client was the victim of poor political relations between Egypt and Israel.

Three accomplices of Mr Azam, Emad Abdel Hamid Ismail, an Egyptian, and two Israeli Arab women — Zahra Youseff Greissi and Mona Ahmed Shawhala — were given life sentences in absentia on the same charges. The trial became the focus of Egyptian hostility to Israel, which has intensified since Mr Netanyahu became prime minister last year.

The espionage charges mainly involved economic spying, according to the charges brought against Mr Azam, who was employed by one of the few Israeli-Egyptian joint ventures in Cairo.

Mr Azam's brothers, who were in court, earlier had said that their brother would be acquitted. Israel has repeatedly denied the charges were true and the case has been portrayed by the Israeli government and media as an officially inspired fabrication. However, there is no doubt that Egyptian popular an-

imosity to Israel has grown. Mr Azam's Egyptian attorney, Farid el-Deeb, was denounced as a traitor by other Egyptian lawyers. The Egyptian press portrayed Mr Azam and Mr Ismail as spies long before the verdict was announced.

In Israel the government reacted strongly. David Bar-Ilan, the Prime Minister's aide, said: "The Prime Minister is in the cabinet meeting that this is an outrage. Azam Azam is innocent. He does not deserve to spend one day in jail."

Mr Netanyahu has been lobbying Mubarak to release Azam since he was arrested in November 1996. The King predicted that the village will soon fall and that subsequent resistance will come primarily from the Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

A Khmer Rouge faction is fighting alongside Prince Ranariddh's men. Prince Ranariddh's military supporters were still fighting yes-

terday along the northern border with Thailand, where they have held out against Hun Sen's larger forces for more than two weeks at the village of O'Smarch.

The King predicted that the village will soon fall and that subsequent resistance will come primarily from the Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

A Khmer Rouge faction is fighting alongside Prince Ranariddh's men. Prince Ranariddh's military supporters were still fighting yes-

Angolan rebels step into line

Angola's former rebel movement said on Sunday it would fulfil United Nations Security Council demands to avert new sanctions, but officials close to the peace process said they doubted Unita's will to comply. Last week the Security Council announced a package of sanctions due to come into effect on 30 September unless Secretary-General Kofi Annan confirms that Unita has taken "concrete and irreversible steps" to fulfil its obligations. Reuters - Luanda

Israelis flights to Jordan

Israel said it hoped to reach a permanent accord soon to allow it to divert international flights to its congested Elat resort to the Red Sea airport at Aqaba, Jordan. The project to divert flights from Elat's congested airport to Aqaba, just six miles away, was the first major Israeli-Jordanian venture announced to cement a peace treaty signed in 1994.

Reuters - Aqaba

Poles in military pact

The defence ministers of Poland, Germany and Denmark announced plans to establish a joint military corps, which would begin operation after Poland's entry into Nato. The unit is planned to start operation in April 1999 and will be made up of three divisions of 8,000 to 10,000 troops each. Its headquarters will be probably in Szczecin, Poland, on the Baltic coast near the Polish-German border.

AP - Warsaw

Montserrat hopes for aid

Montserrat's volcano continued rumbling, spewing ash and rocks as the island eagerly awaited the arrival of a top British official and the possibility of more aid.

Government officials and the general public are looking forward to the arrival today of Development Minister George Foulkes (right), hoping he will announce a new aid package for people who want to stay on the British colony. AP - Salem



Biker gangs open fire

Police warned residents to stay off the streets after a shootout between rival motorcycle gangs in the Queensland central coast city of Mackay. Six people, all believed to be gang members, were in hospital with gunshot wounds after the gunfire between members of the Odins Warriors and the Outlaws motorcycle gangs, a police spokesman said.

Cambodia's king warns of threat to poll

Siem Reap, Cambodia (AP) — King Norodom Sihanouk, calling his country "an island of war", predicted yesterday that free elections could not be held without peace between his son and the coalition partner who deposed the Prince in a coup.

The frail monarch returned to Cambodia on Friday after six months of medical treatment in China, and offered to mediate a peace deal to end two months

of factional warfare. "If they allow me to do something, I would also like to participate in the informal talks," the King said, referring to possible negotiations between the Second Prime Minister, Hun Sen, and royalists led by the King's son, the former First Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Hun Sen has promised elections for next May, the fifth anniversary of a United Nations

organised vote that brought him to power in a tense coalition with Prince Ranariddh which was shattered by the coup in early July.

King Sihanouk, 74, told reporters in Siem Reap that he was willing to take up Hun Sen's offer to be a supreme adviser during the elections, but expressed doubts that the poll would be free and fair.

"If we continue like we have been doing in the last two

months, we cannot have a democratic, free and fair election," he said. "We will have a guided, arranged election."

Prince Ranariddh won the election in 1993, but Hun Sen forced his way into a coalition by threatening renewed civil war. Few expect Hun Sen to lose next time or to surrender power if he does.

Prince Ranariddh's military supporters were still fighting yes-

terday along the northern border with Thailand, where they have held out against Hun Sen's larger forces for more than two weeks at the village of O'Smarch.

The King predicted that the village will soon fall and that subsequent resistance will come primarily from the Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

A Khmer Rouge faction is fighting alongside Prince Ranariddh's men. Prince Ranariddh's military supporters were still fighting yes-

Cash is the key to ending tradition of generations

THE MOROCCAN HARVEST

Business is booming, writes Elizabeth Nash, in the last part of her series on marijuana in Morocco

ney across the Mediterranean through Spain and the Netherlands, subdivided from dealer to dealer with a bigger markup at every step, to emerge for sale on the streets of London or Manchester at some £2,000 per kilo — 50 times the price paid to small producers in the Rif mountains.

Under pressure from European governments, the Moroccan authorities are stepping up repressive measures against traffickers: last month they increased the maximum prison term from 10 to 30 years, with a maximum fine of \$90,000 dirhams (£5,500). More than 18,000 traf-

fers were seized last year, and 342 foreigners — including 40 Britons — are serving time in Moroccan jails for drug offences.

The authorities insist they aim to eradicate production of *kif*, the cannabis plant, altogether, though they dare not infringe the Berbers' ancient tradition of cultivation for fear of revolt. They seek to promote alternative activities such as olive oil and apple production and eco-tourism, with the help of EU funds.

Cannabis cultivation derives from poverty, and the problem must be solved in the framework of the overall development of the northern

region," the director of Morocco's recently established Northern Development Agency, Hassan Amraoui, said this week in Rabat.

"Repression is necessary, but we can't keep it up indefinitely. Our challenge is to find a long-term solution. We must offer an alternative activity for millions who live from *kif* production, and for that we need support from friendly countries and institutions like the EU."

The laid-back days of the Sixties and Seventies, when Europe's hippies wandered through the Rif swathed in *chilaba* kaffans and puffing their *kif* pipes, have gone. Local fathers' initial surprised amusement swiftly gave way to the steady reali-

sation that a limitless market existed for their traditional smoke. Within a decade, land devoted to *kif* had increased tenfold and now covers between 50,000 and 74,000 hectares. A trafficking network has sprung into shape that extends throughout Europe and brings an estimated \$2bn (£1.6bn) a year into Morocco. Moroccans insist that hashish mostly leaves the country in the hands of British, Dutch or Italian trafficking clans.

Tens of thousands of unfinished high-rise apartment blocks in the northern city of Tangier are thought to have been financed by drug-profits as a means of money laundering. Producers continue to operate with virtual impunity due to budgetary constraints and widespread corruption," US State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement said in a report in March 1996.

Some observers in Rabat say stamping out *kif* production, even with the best will in the world, is wishful thinking doomed to failure, especially with a quickening debate in Europe about possible decriminalisation of hashish. Some fear that improvements of infrastructure in the Rif could in the short term even help the traffickers. But international diplomatic sources say Rabat's latest effort to develop the north is the best so far, and they are prepared to

Proms
John Dankworth
and Cleo Laine
RAH, London

The Julian Joseph All-Star Big Band was the Proms jazz feature two years ago. In 1996, Darius Milhaud's jazz-inspired ballet *La Crâation du monde* was the nearest the season came to the subject. This year, however, it was the turn of John Dankworth and Cleo Laine to act as jazz standard-bearers, complete with the Dankworth Sextet, the BBC Concert Orchestra and the BBC Big Band.

Whatever the statistics, the venue or the cultural pecking order between classical and other music, a high-profile evening exposing these two artists is always worth enjoying. This was a fact known to the Albert Hall's near-capacity audience on Friday, who rapturously received a class act honed to perfection through decades of experience.

There is after all in this country jazz, and then, perhaps, Dankworth jazz by provenance a London product, but built enduringly, and to travel. As this rich yet not cloying programme showed, it's a compilation product. Laine's voice, amazing at 70 but amazing at any age, is one important element. Dankworth's brilliant and highly personal arrangements are another (he's also an excellent composer in an excellently old-fashioned sense). The Dankworth Sextet, seasoned performers though young in looks as in spirit, pull it all together. The rest of the trick lies in the Dankworths' dialogue, extending friendship and intimacy, as long as the performance lasts, to the audience not *en masse*, but as a mass of individuals.

The show began with tributes to English literature: a *Shakespeare Fantasia* and instrumental *What the Dickens!* suite. *A Dun-sinane Blues* and *Take all my Loves* (Sonnet 40), ardently delivered by Laine, gave a taste of things to come. The dirge from *Cymbeline* and *Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?* added an antidote of melancholy, with some pretty neat setting of England prosody by the way. In musical code, Dickens's name became an angular motif, bell-like when played as a chord, and a useful book-end for episodes with Oliver Twist and *The Pickwick Papers*' study solicitors Dobson and Fog (Dankworth and Tim Garland in slippery saxophone duet). The first half ended with Ellington's "Caravan" in Dankworth's raunchy symphonic arrangement, barking brass and manic rhythm section against clarinet and trombone solo choruses.

There were two more Dankworth scores after the interval. *Double Vision*, a BBC commission and world premiere, and excerpts from the *Zodiac Variations* of 1964 might have convinced you it was his evening. But then enter Dame Cleo Laine to sing Gershwin's "Bidding My Time", Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow", and toast Duke Ellington songs. The voice reigned supreme, skillfully working the microphone in another Gershwin number, "I've Got a Crush On You", and barking out, with superb diction, Holiday's classic lines with the backing of the full sextet.

Alternating clarinet and sax, Dankworth kept up the pace with riffs and backings, adding fine inventions of his own to Ellington's "Creole Love Song". "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" unleashed Laine's scat singing on a suspecting public. After that experience, there was no need for an encore.

Nicholas Williams



Staying on

It's two months since the Union Jack last flew over Hong Kong, but there's still one man flying the flag for Blighty. Michael Church meets David Atherton, music director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic

No one who saw it will ever forget Governor Patten's bowed head as he listened to *Nimrod* on that last rain-drenched day of empire just two short months ago. Some viewers may have noticed the cameras alighting from time to time on another head, bowed not in grief but in concentration. That was David Atherton, music director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic — the orchestra charged with setting the handover to music — but the story as he tells it is pure comedy.

"I walked out on stage holding an umbrella over myself and our soloist, Dame Gwyneth Jones, while members of the administration held umbrellas over the bases as they played.

— their normal instruments would have cracked open and the glue dissolved in five minutes. Every instrument was mired in water which side their bread is buttered on, and started doing business with Beijing. Over the last few weeks our board has altered slightly, but that's only because of local government changes. It's still local people running things, and mostly the same people, the same politicians and businessmen."

But this, he says, is not a city where the arts are pre-eminent. "Money is what it's all about. The arts are a low priority; they are almost everywhere else." That said, he's still in a better position than any music director in the West, since 75 per cent of his funding comes from local government. This means that he can plan with a confidence which seems contagious: he's never lost so few players through natural wastage, and never had

backing-group for Chinese folksongs, and that at some point the orchestra should do a small symphonic piece." Hence *Nimrod*, and Patten's tears, after which the rain suddenly stopped.

For the next five days the orchestra joined in the official celebrations, and premiered the *Symphony 1997 (Heaven, Earth, Mankind)* which the expatriate Chinese composer Tan Dun had written especially for the occasion. "It was business as usual," says Atherton. "We didn't have time to stop and think." Two months on, he has had time to think, and still feels fine about the contract he's signed to work on under Chinese rules until September of the year 2000.

"So far nothing untoward has happened, because the real handover has been happening steadily over the last four or five years. The big companies have seen which side their bread is buttered on, and started doing business with Beijing. Over the last few weeks our board has altered slightly, but that's only because of local government changes. It's still local people running things, and mostly the same people, the same politicians and businessmen."

But this, he says, is not a city where the arts are pre-eminent. "Money is what it's all about. The arts are a low priority; they are almost everywhere else." That said, he's still in a better position than any music director in the West, since 75 per cent of his funding comes from local government. This means that he can plan with a confidence which seems contagious: he's never lost so few players through natural wastage, and never had

so many good ones queuing to join. "We can't specifically reassure people about the future — all we can say is that our indications are positive. But that seems more than enough." Strange: it's as if the Tiananmen massacre never happened.

Atherton's first encounter with his future band — 1989 — was not auspicious. "They'd told me they wanted an international-standard orchestra, so I listened, and to be honest was appalled at what I heard. I felt things could only get better." He took the plunge and swung into action.

"My duty was to improve the orchestra, so some very unpleasant decisions had to be taken. Now the players who are there are there on merit, and for no other reason. Though half the players were Western, I decided to use nobody's Christian name, so that the Chinese wouldn't feel I was giving preferential treatment. I also stopped the Westerners running off to do extramarital work to top up their salaries."

They comprise 13 different nationalities, with half coming from the West and half from the East. Atherton has not (yet) come under pressure to increase the ratio of Chinese. Each year he auditions in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and London, as well as on both sides of America, where mainland Chinese graduates of the Curtis and Juilliard schools see the Hong Kong Philharmonic as their way back home.

"These Chinese players may not have much musical experience," says Atherton, "but they have tremendous technical ability. The diversity of their background does bring problems: a Chinese person won't approach Mozart in the same way as a person from New York — but then neither will a player trained in Israel. The challenge is to impose a style to which they can all relate, and which makes sense musically."

It was five years before he felt confident enough to take them into the recording studios.

and then he was careful to steer off repertoire which might have evoked uncomfortable comparisons with the Berlin Phil. Their recordings of lesser-known Stravinsky are good by any standards.

The other challenge was to build an audience. The vast majority of people who come to listen to the Hong Kong Phil have a mainland Chinese background and, therefore, no prior experience of Western music. "But this means that they come with no prejudices. A few years ago we did the Faure Requiem and Gorecki's Third before it had become famous. If we'd put that programme on in the West, anywhere outside the big culturally-aware cities like London or New York, people would have stayed away in droves. In Hong Kong the hall was full because they'd learnt to trust us." But there's still some basic training to be done. Under the heading "Be a Sensitive Member of the Audience", the current programme asks you to "respect the orchestra and your fellow music-lovers by not chatting or making unnecessary noise and, unless it is absolutely necessary, please don't leave your seat during the performance. If you have a cough, please muffle it with your handkerchief." No such sneers: such advice would not come amiss at the Royal Albert Hall.

Where, as it happens, Atherton — who once held the record as the youngest ever conductor to appear at the Proms — will take the podium on Saturday with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, of which he is principal guest conductor.

He has a string of parallel relationships, regularly conducting at the New York Met and at English National Opera, where he passed up the music directorship last year in favour of an extension to his Hong Kong contract. He continues to run the Mainly Mozart festival in San Diego, and his relationship with the London Sinfonietta, which he founded 30 years ago, seems to have languished — presumably because of his oft-stated view that composers have to earn the right to be played "rather than being plucked out of nowhere". This 33-year-old Lancashire lad doesn't mince his words.

When not making music, he plays with computers. But seriously: he's networked his entire Hong Kong office, and can bring up every individual screen on his personal computer when he's in London. "It's phenomenal," he says, "with a giant those underlings must dread. "I can look at people's schedules from across the world, and change them if it seems desirable. Computers are a marvellous antidote to music, because with them it's either right or wrong. It's finite, while music is infinite. I love tinkering and refiguring. I've never had a crash that I couldn't sort out."

Will the Hong Kong idyll crash? Are there no tanks on the horizon? "Who can say? This may sound boring but, for the time being, the news is all good."

David Atherton conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the Proms on Saturday 7.30pm Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 (0171-589 8212), and live on BBC Radio 3

David Atherton: planning with confidence Photo: Tony Buckingham

Contemporary music
Usher Hall, Edinburgh

were sung late at night. Dillon's most obvious background lies in the work of Xenakis and perhaps figures like Ferneyhough and Finnissey. But where Xenakis is gritty and elemental, Ferneyhough aggressively abstruse, Dillon (who has been a rock musician) has a love of sheer sound, with a delicate ear for timbre and texture.

His *Überschreiten* seemed too uniform and short-winded, but

the premiere of *Blitzschlag* revealed a richly inventive piece for flute and orchestra: the solo part swirling with bird-like embellishments — the eloquent player was Pierre-Yves Artaud — and an accompaniment that articulated individual notes and intervals, the clinking wind and pattering strings rediscovering metrical time. The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, whose record for playing new music is honourable indeed, were conducted by Martyn Brabbins.

This Usher Hall performance was followed by a "music theatre" piece, *Black on White* by Heiner Goebbels, for which we had to trek to the Royal Lyceum Theatre just next door. There we found a stage full of low benches, amidst which the

17 musicians played draughts, baited a shuttlecock and played skittles with trombone mutes. There was nothing that could be called real musical invention. But this was not the point; this kind of event is meant to decompress the economy of normal concert life, to erode the nexus of score and performer, performer and audience, syntax and comprehension.

The members of Ensemble Modern traipsed around, flung tennis balls, recited fragments from Eliot and Poe, and occasionally showed that they could really play, together with normal instruments there were a contrabass clarinet, cymbalom, koto and electric clavichord. The nice gag was the placing of a whistle on a boiling kettle, which

played a sweet chord while a piccolo improvised in dreamy Debussy rapture. The whole thing was poised between enigma, irony and send-up. Profound it was not. But then, it was meant to send up profundity, along with every other feature of our musical world.

The Kurtág songs, back in the Usher Hall, were stonily and enormously texturally dense, apparently in eight or more parts, and needed an unusually able choir. The Edinburgh Festival Singers, conducted by David Jones, proved themselves well up to the task, and the composer had come all the way from Hungary to hear their passionate and plaintive tones.

Raymond Monelle

Tomorrow in the Tabloid: Andrew Lambirth on French Printmaking at the British Museum

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Strong, fit, compelling: Nederlands Dans Theater III perform 'No Sleep Till Dawn of Day'. Photo: Joris Jan Bos

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features

Not an ounce out of control

The Monday Interview



Deborah Ross
talks to

ROSEMARY CONLEY

I meet Rosemary Conley – author of the perpetually best-selling *Hip and Thigh Diet* – at a hotel in central London. She is already up in the suite when I arrive, all big lacquered hair and gleaming lipstick and super-tight little body perched primly and thinly on the edge of the sofa.

Of course, I do not work my way towards her in any way which would give her a glimpse of my backside. What fool would? Instead, I kind of edge around the wall, while firmly keeping my back to it. Are you feeling well, Rosemary asks. I am quite well, thank you, I reply. It's just that I don't want you to view my bottom, you being an expert on bottoms and doubtless knowing a nasty one when you see it. "But," she cries, "you have nothing to worry about! You're so slim!" Naturally, I'd intended to get quite tough on Rosemary. Naturally, I had planned to come over very feminist and scold her for pushing the slimming ideal, something imposed on women by oppressive males in the interest of maintaining the patriarchy and being able to go to the football on Saturday afternoons and not mow the lawn. But blow all that rubbish now. I'm slim! I'm slim! I've got nothing to worry about! Rosemary Conley herself says so! And she, of course, should know.

Rosemary's hip and thigh book has dominated the best-seller lists for more than nine years. All her subsequent books – *Rosemary Conley's Complete Hip and Thigh Diet*, *The Hip and Thigh Diet Cookbook*, *The Inch Loss Plan*, *The Metabolism Booster Diet* and so on and so forth – have proved instant best-sellers, as have the videos. In fact, she is here today to launch her latest video, *Rosemary Conley's Ultimate Fat Burner* (£12.99). This features Rosemary doing a lot of terribly frightening, bouncy, stretchy things in a multi-coloured, floral leotard. It is wholly draining and exhausting, and would doubtless have been even more so had I bothered to get out my chair. As it was, I felt quite faint after 10 minutes.

As fat as I can work out, Rosemary releases a book or a video – or both – at least once a year. As such, I wonder if she'll shortly run out of body parts to focus on, and be reduced to doing *The Total Eyelet Diet*, say. She doesn't think so. "Certainly, with the fitness videos, you can't run out of ideas because there is always new music, new routines, new formats. But, yes, I do sometimes get diet-fatigued."

In fact, now I think about it, *The Total Eyelet Diet* is not such a bad idea. It could involve winking a lot, picking up strange men on the Tube and having so much sex that you forget to eat. What do you think, Rosemary? "It's um, quite an interesting thought," she says. You're not going to nick it, are you, I ask worriedly. "No. Certainly not," she retorts indignantly. "I've never stolen anything in my life." Of course, Rosemary Conley has a brilliant sense of humour and loves my excellent jokes. She just seems to be having a hard time showing it today.

Anyway, she is immensely rich. Aside from the books and videos, and her weekly spots on *This Morning* and the bi-monthly *Rosemary Conley Diet and Fitness Magazine*, there are also the Rosemary Conley Diet and Fitness Clubs. Launched in 1993, this is now the fastest-growing franchise in the UK, with more than 2,300 classes held weekly for 70,000 members. Rosemary



Rosemary Conley, weight-loss guru and committed Christian: "I appreciate what I've got, but money means absolutely nothing to me." Photograph: Adrian Dennis

drives a Bentley (number plate ROS 1E.) She owns a big house in Leicestershire with horses and acres of land. Her fingers sparkle with diamonds. How much is she worth exactly?

"I wouldn't know," she says. Why on earth not? "I'm just not interested." Oh, come off it. "I'm not. Money means absolutely nothing to me." But the Bentley? The house? The diamonds? "I am very happy about having these things. I appreciate what I've got. I'm not saying I don't. But what I am saying is that I'm not one of those people who wants to count up exactly how much I'm worth."

Rosemary Conley is a committed Christian, while allowed to diet a lot and have nice houses and motors and horses and sing like Cliff Richard, should not be overly interested in money for money's sake, so Rosemary isn't. Rosemary is not, I suspect, a woman who leaves much to chance. Her mind can't ever surprise her, because she's given it to God. Her body can't ever surprise her because

she watches it too closely. She always has to be in control, in other words.

No, the photographer cannot take pictures as we talk, because he might get a profile, and she won't allow profiles because she hates her nose. "Too big. Too hooked." When did she last let herself go? "On the eating front?" she asks. On any front, I say. "Well, at one point, I started going back to eating butter on bread rolls in restaurants." You wild and reckless thing, you. "Yes, it's so easy to slip back. But I stopped doing it one Lent a couple of years ago and I haven't done it since."

Last night, she went out for dinner and yes, had a pudding – "a soufflé thing". But that's OK, because "I didn't have cream with it" and she made up for it this morning by having half her usual breakfast. Which is? "One and a half ounces of All-Bran instead of three ounces." Miss Conley is 50. It seems to me that there is something quite sad about a 50-year-old woman measuring out All-Bran in a hotel room after a night out.

but I don't doubt that it makes her happy. Best leave nothing to chance.

People who are obsessed with their own weight tend to be so, most psychologists would agree, because it gives them something to control in a world which, they feel, is mostly beyond their control. Is this true of Rosemary? Perhaps.

Her childhood was, for the most part, quite straightforward. She was born in Leicestershire to Celia, a housewife with a mercantile streak – she invented a nylon cap to go over hair rollers which she sold through Harrods and Osvald, a hosiery wholesaler. She was always very close to her father.

"He was an ever so kind, good, hard-working man," she says. "When I was eight, his business went bust because other people went bust on him. He went into voluntary liquidation but then took out a bank loan to pay off all his creditors, which he did, even though it took him 10 years. He was incredibly decent."

"My mother died 18 years ago but my father is still alive. Sadly, he is in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's now. It started six or seven years ago when he started pouring milk into the sugar bowl. I spoke to him every day until six months ago when there stopped being any point,

he didn't know who I was. My stepmother, Mabel, looks after him for four weeks out of six. For the other two weeks, he's in respite care. Last time I went to visit him in respite, there was a lady there who was 57 – 57! Just seven years older than me. And she was completely out of it!"

Does Rosemary mind getting older, then? "Put it this way, I'd like things to stay where they are now." No, she has never and will never consider plastic surgery. "I don't believe in interfering with nature. That's why I've never had my nose done." But aren't you interfering with nature by going about and telling women they shouldn't have hips and thighs? I mean, we're meant to be pear shaped, aren't we? Yes, she agrees, we are. But why be a Comme when you can be Conference? "Analysing yourself is much better about yourself!"

She left school at 14 for a secretarial course; she met Phil, her first husband, and an accountant, when she was 16. They were married when she was 21 and had a daughter, Dawn. It was a good marriage all told, she thinks. Trouble was, she got fat.

She had been a skinny child, and never much interested in food. But her husband was, a wife with housekeeping money and her own kitchen and a subscription to one of those cordon bleu part works. "I made coq

au vin! Meringues. Cakes! And ate them!" she recalls with considerable horror. Her weight went up to 10st 3lb – not huge, even for her 5ft 2in. But it felt monstrous to her. "I hated my weight gain. Hated it. My husband didn't mind, but I cried all the time."

For some years, she fought a losing battle against fat, taking off a stone then putting it on again through bingeing on five litres of ice cream at a sitting, or lumps of cheese spread with butter. Eventually, she took herself off to Weight Watchers, which helped bring her weight down – but didn't do much for her hips and thighs – and led to her starting her own diet class in her kitchen. Sugg – slimming and good grooming – eventually grew into a chain which she sold to IPC for £50,000. The money allowed her to part amicably from Phil. "We'd just drifted apart."

Not long afterwards, she became unwell, suffering from gallstones. She ended up in hospital – an event which, I reckon, is the pivotal moment in the Rosemary Conley life story. Here she was, ill, with no husband, no business, and those obstinate hips and thighs. Yes, she did feel very out of control and she would, she thinks, have had a nervous breakdown if two things hadn't happened. Firstly, she chanced upon a Christian book, *The Power of Living*, which converted her and made God appear before her in a dream, saying "I shall provide". Then, her doctors told her if she wanted to avoid surgery she would have to go on a low-fat diet and take more exercise. She lost a lot of weight and, miraculously, a lot of it went from her thighs and hips. She then wrote about her experiences – "to help other women".

Of course, there had been diet books:

When did she last let herself go? "I started eating butter on bread rolls. It's so easy to slip back"

before. And there have been umpteen since. And prescribing a low-fat diet coupled with exercise isn't exactly revolutionary. So what made and continues to make *The Hip and Thigh Diet* so enduringly popular? First off, I reckon, it's the name. Mention hips and thighs and you quite literally go right to the bottom of the average British woman's neurosis. Then there's the fact Rosemary is who she is. She isn't a doctor. She isn't a Jane Fonda. "I'm just an ordinary woman offering sensible advice that works," she says. "People can identify with me."

Yes, she says, she is sure that God approves of a life dedicated to spreading the low-fat word. "We should stop all this nonsense about not being vain and that we shouldn't be dieting," she says. "God didn't make us fat! We made ourselves fat!" Still, there must be a better way of serving God, surely? "I also give talks about my Christian faith," she says. "I give £2 a year."

She now lives with her second husband, Mike Rimmington, a one-time TV engineer who is now her manager. Both are wholly dedicated to God and the Rosemary Conley business, which doesn't appear to leave time for much else, not that Rosemary seems to need any hobbies or anything. Certainly, she doesn't seem to need any emotional outlets. No, she doesn't read. Or listen to music. Or go to the cinema. She only occasionally watches telly. (She likes *The Bill* and *Pie in the Sky*, "although that chap could do with giving on a diet".)

So what does she do when she's not praying or bouncing about on videos? "I do like flower arranging. My favourite flower? The lily, although you have to watch out for the pollen because it stains." Once a year, she goes on holiday to Austria with Slimmer from her clubs. I wonder what going to Austria with a group of slimmers is like. Do you all stand outside the cake shop, looking at the strudels and dribbling all over whatever strudel you happen to find yourself huddled on? "Oh no. We have a super-lovely time. We stay at the same hotel where they make us low-fat food."

The Total Eyelet Diet, published by Dross Books, will be available from next week, price £4.99. Steep, I know, but if you're only going to have one good idea in your life, you might as well make it pay.

Reading about Jeep Disease makes me feel better

When are you supposed to start flossing your children's teeth?" asked the fresh-faced young American mother of an 18-month-old, sitting opposite me in the doctor's surgery. Hell's teeth, I have enough problems getting my hands into my own mouth, which is why my flossing resolutions never last beyond three days after my visit to the dental hygienist. I suppose she thought that a mother of four would have all that kind of thing sussed by now and that we looked like a shining model of family health and hygiene. If only she knew. My four-year-old and eight-year-old both have fillings (you tend to give up the puffed-rice-cakes-only regime after the first baby) and all this week we have been bonding over the nit comb. Instead of feeling pleased that the male side of the family has escaped the scourge of head lice,

I have been worrying that I don't have enough head-to-head contact with them. And we were sitting there in the doctor's surgery because I wanted to have one of the boy's moles checked out, just in case the three bottles of Factor 30 we got through on holiday hadn't been enough to stop a few rays of carcinogenic sunshine getting through. As usual, I had to contend myself with the doctor's reassurance that my son's only affliction was a paranoid mother. This probably wasn't the time to mention that my medical dictionary also says that head lice can transmit the organisms of typhus fever ...

Return home to look up "hypochondria" in my dictionary of symptoms but instead my attention is caught by "Jeep Disease", which can be identified by a "discharging spot, perhaps with a tuft of hairs sticking



Dinah Hall

out, releasing a blood-stained, foul-smelling material, in the cleft above the back passage" and is so named because it is thought to be caused by sitting on a hard and vibrating seat, as in a jeep. It isn't often that my medical books cheer me up, but this casts a whole new light on people who think it's cool to drive round London in a farm Land Rovers. doesn't it. My suburban Renault Espace has never seemed so attractive.

But back to hypochondria. I had always attributed my own case to childhood exposure to *Emergency – Ward 10* and *Doctor Kildare* but I now find that it may

be a defence mechanism in work failure or marital failure or a self-punishment for imaginary guilt. It doesn't say anything about heredity but I fear my 10-year-old son has it worse than me. I don't think I can be blamed for this – I have always tried very hard to conceal my hysteria. If the children cannot pinpoint the exact origin of a bruise (bruising comes under leukaemia), my son was posing for a photo like "would you rather have muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy or dyslexia?" – all of which were starring aliments in novels he was reading at the time. Now, despite being a strapping, healthy boy, he is convinced that I am concealing some mysterious illness from him. "Are you sure this holiday meal out/packet of sweets isn't just a final treat for me?" he demands suspiciously, whenever we even border on being nice to him. In retrospect, I should have swallowed my intellectual pride and let him loose on Enid Blyton.

Bereft of our nanny (yippee! I can throw away TESCO carrier bags and left-over food without feeling guilty – inside her young and glamorous façade, Kelly has the spirit of someone who has lived through two world wars) I have sent the three oldest children off to stay with my parents in the country for a holiday free of medical paranoias. And what is the first thing my mother does with them? Takes them to the veterinary surgery where, she says, the nice vet man showed them how to "squeeze dogs' bottoms". Yes really. Apparently, explains my oldest son over the phone, dogs have these muck glands in their rectums (hence the traditional form of canine greeting), which sometimes get blocked. The children may have missed out on summer school, but it's good to know they've picked up some really useful life-skills this summer.

Footsie's retreat heightens fears that the bull market is over

Footsie was in ragged retreat last week, prompting the inevitable worry that the long-running bull market had finally expired.

In four days the blue chip index fell 83.6 points to 4,817.5. It is now 269.3 below the peak achieved early last month. At the start of the year Footsie was at a then high of 4,185.

Its relentless progress since then, produced against a chorus of bearish comment, caught experts on the hop. In January, a Footsie standing at 4,600 points by the year-end was the most optimistic forecast on offer. Naturally adjustments to predictions were made as the year progressed and it is currently not difficult to find forecasts suggesting Footsie will end December at least at 5,000. It would not be surprising if the optimists are now suffering growing spasms of anxiety.

During its run this year, the stock market has absorbed all the expected problems, such as

rising interest rates, inflation and the impact of a rampant sterling, as well as the uncertainty created by the election and change of government. If the market was going to suffer a major hit after all this, then the blow would have had to come from an unexpected quarter.

As it happened, few had factored a Far Eastern storm into the equation. Currency turmoil in Thailand had hardly been noticed. Suddenly the currency and share markets of the Tiger economies are in disarray and just what sort of impact their discomfort will have on western markets is occupying City minds.

As Robin Griffiths and Fiona Bolt at HSBC said recently: "The end of a bull run comes like a thief in the night".

So is it all over? Have shares peaked and the likes of Tony Dye, the PDFM fund manager who piled into cash after banking on a share crash,

at last going to be able to catch up after missing this year's equity party?

"Red" Dye is not the only fund manager to be wrong-footed by the strength of the market. He attracted attention because he adopts a high profile and displays a refreshing candour in discussing his views. Many other fund managers have privately voiced the opinion the market is far too high. Indeed they could be heard saying so when Footsie was 4,400. Naturally enough the raffined attitude of nearly 5,100 left them looking exceedingly embarrassed and their portfolios, no doubt, the subject of urgent discussion with their trustees.

The Asian crisis could quickly blow over, although some observers are intent on producing a doom and gloom scenario. Seemingly powerful upsets in distant parts have a habit of fading. There has, as yet, been no evidence of nervous selling in London and

price movements have often, for reasons best known to market-makers, been exaggerated.

New York, as always, holds the key. To some extent the rest

of the world has to meekly trot along the route adopted by the biggest market of them all.

New York is closed for Labor Day today. Ahead of the resulting long weekend, there was clearly a reluctance on Thursday and Friday to get too deeply involved; so the extent of the American reaction to the Pacific problems has yet to be

quantified.

It is likely that after a modest hiccup, London blue chips will settle down, even if they do not resume the heady progress they have achieved this year. Still, it must not be overlooked that the tenth anniversary of the 1987 crash occurs next month. It could be a nervous time. On the other hand, there

is no reason to believe shares will not enjoy their traditional roll in the Christmas run-up.

Interest rates and other economic and political influences permitting, a Footsie standing around the 5,300 mark in a year's time looks a realistic expectation.

And there are unusual straws of hope in the wind. For example, Mark Tinker at UBS believes the Budget removal of tax credits could provide a spur to the market, with the ACT changes possibly prompting a deluge of share buy-backs.

"With the present low value of gearing it is possible to enhance shareholder value by adding debt and buying back equity," says.

The amounts involved are potentially staggering. Were the UK to move to the same level of gearing as, say, Continental Europe or the US, it would imply over £100bn of share buy-backs.

In this country, companies

are on average 30 per cent geared compared with more than 60 per cent in America and on the Continent. He believes the ACT change could push companies towards taking on more debt and thereby taking advantage of debt tax breaks. "Interest payments can be offset against corporation tax, dividends cannot," he points out.

The main beneficiaries of share buy-backs are large groups, say the top 350. The rest of the market would probably react with splendid indifference to any such move. The small capitalisation companies seem, at least for the time being, to be unable to pick themselves up, no matter what the incentive.

The supporting FTSE 250 index and the FTSE Smallcap index have both missed this year's equity party and even the relatively modest enthusiasm displayed early last month has since been snuffed out.

Like the rest of the packaging and paper industry, Smurfit has found the going tough and interim results down from £126m to near £50m seem likely.

Hilldown will have experienced flat food profits but should have scored on the house-building front. A modest overall interim improvement to £53m is expected.

High-flying pub chain Wetherspoon should serve up year's profits of nearly £18m against £13.1m before, and Schroders could produce an interim result of £130m, up from £115.9m.

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A busy reporting schedule this week stars Burmah Castrol, Hilldown Holdings, Jefferson Smurfit, JD Wetherspoon and Schroders. Burmah is one of sterling's casualties and the strong pound will take the shine off interim figures, due today. Net income little changed at around £68m is the guess.

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business & city

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FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR

Asian markets braced for new slump

Matthew Chance
Bangkok
Magnus Grimond

South-east Asian markets battered by last week's financial typhoon will reopen today facing a period of extreme nervousness, exacerbated by criticisms made at the weekend by Alan Greenspan, the US Federal Reserve chairman, over the handling of the crisis.

Echoing many western investors, Mr Greenspan said current levels of "transparency" were too low and called for international financial institutions to intervene to

force the issue.

Addressing a meeting of central bankers in Wyoming, he said the lessons of both the Thai crisis and the earlier difficulties faced by Mexico showed that governments must provide reliable and up-to-date economic and financial information.

Mr Greenspan's is the most high profile of a number of criticisms by western financial observers of the handling of the economic problems of the region.

At the same weekend meeting, Stanley Fisher, deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said Thailand could have

averted the crisis had it heeded IMF advice earlier: "We were very frank with the Thais. It didn't prevent the crisis. You cannot force a government to take action."

Last week's panic selling of stocks wiped billions of dollars off houses in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and beleaguered Thailand. Even the normally resilient markets in Hong Kong and Tokyo received a hammering as jittery investors pulled out their funds in what may be a large-scale reassessment of Asian economies.

"We are certainly witnessing the effect of a crisis in confidence amongst investors," said Brett Williams, a senior analyst with Krungthai Thanakai Securities in Bangkok. "There may be a global rethink under way in the markets, and to some extent the falls we saw last week in the South-east Asian region could reflect a real concern that Asia may not be good a deal as it once was."

The catalyst in this re-think has undoubtedly been the devastating financial crisis in Thailand. Low exports, a badly overstretched banking sector and a slumped property market which has left lenders saddled with more than \$70bn in private sector debts, has plunged this once booming Tiger economy

into its first recession for more than two decades.

Despite innumerable plans by the country's leadership to halt the decline, none was successful and a humiliating de-facto devaluation of the Thai currency, the baht, was followed last month by the acceptance of a stringent \$16bn economic bail-out package agreed with the IMF.

But the package has done little to restore the collapse in investor confidence that preceded it, and financiers are concerned that the problems which led to Thailand's economic malaise may also have the potential to emerge in neighbouring countries.

"At the moment there are only anecdotal signs that things could be wrong," said Mr Williams, "but more scrutiny of these countries' economies may reveal problems not unlike Thailand's just waiting to happen. The market will judge."

This contagion effect, the knock-on of Thailand's woes, may account for much of last week's turmoil on the South-east Asian markets.

Sharing a "risk-group" with Thailand, the other nations and economies of the region may be suffering as a direct result of their neighbour's poor image and failing financial structures.

Pay rises starting to move ahead of inflation

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

Rising inflation is fueling an acceleration in pay rises, with key companies agreeing increases considerably higher than the growth in the Retail Price Index, according to research published today.

At a time when the headline monthly inflation rate stood at 2.9 per cent, engineering and clerical workers at BT recently won a 4.3 per cent increase, staff at Bank of Scotland an average 4.7 per cent and Rover Group employees 4.5 per cent. Staff at Marks & Spencer are to receive a rise of 3.5 per cent from July, which will be supplemented by an additional 1 per cent in October to be distributed among staff on merit.

The deals are bound to have an impact on other influential groups of workers, including those at Ford, whose leaders are due to submit a claim for a substantial pay increase this week. Research group Incomes Data Services believes the negotiations at Ford, which begin in earnest in November, may be especially fraught.

With the latest RPI figure now standing at 3.3 per cent and forecast to go higher, the most powerful employees will be seeking increases of 5 per cent or more – aspirations which will cause considerable concern among ministers.

Well over half of settlements in recent weeks have given rises in the 3 to 4 per cent range, according to IDS. Some 140,000 police officers, for instance, will today receive a pay rise of 3.5 per cent as dictated by their automatic pay formula. For those with pay review dates from 1 July onwards, just over a quarter of settlements have raised pay rates by 4 per cent or more.

In its latest IDS Report, the research group says the signs of a pick-up in wage rates may be due to a combination of factors, including higher inflation, falling unemployment, the four successive rises in mortgage rates since May and the strict fiscal measures taken in the Budget.

The study points out that the drop in unemployment has produced extremely tight labour markets in some areas, leading to acute skill shortages, especially in construction and information technology.

* *IDS Report 744, published by Incomes Data Services, 77 Bastwick Street, London EC1V 3TT.*

No sign of a quick recovery for Hong Kong

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

Hong Kong's blue chip Hang Seng Index has crashed below all the support levels which brokers confidently predicted would hold the market, having fallen almost 1,400 points or 9 per cent in the last two trading days.

Although reasons for further pessimism abound, some big Hong Kong investors, such as Mark Mobius, the high-profile president of Templeton Emerging Markets Fund, believe that Hong Kong offers good value at the current lower prices.

Nevertheless most brokers are not prepared to stick their necks out and predict any sudden turnaround. Hong Kong shares may well be trading at giveaway prices, but there is no escaping the market's location in a region which is being deserted in droves by big institutional players.

Moreover, the very liquidity of the Hong Kong market and the fact that it has not lost all the gains made during the past year, make Hong Kong shares the target for sales by fund managers under pressure to raise cash. With investors queuing up to sell their South-east Asian funds, the managers need money to pay for the redemptions.

While this selling pressure lasts, Hong Kong's blue chip index, predominantly traded by institutions, will have a hard time making a recovery. However the rest of the market, which is dominated by local investors, is moving in a different direction.



The eye of the storm: A dealer on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange reacts to market movements as stocks continue to dive

Photograph: Reuter

Richard Lloyd Parry
Tokyo

For a nation of exporters like Japan, fluctuations in the value of trading currencies are always going to be a cause of anxiety, but concerns in Tokyo about the collapse of the Thai baht and its neighbouring South-east Asian currencies have another and deeper dimension.

Apart from the effects that the devaluations are already having on Japanese manufacturers and banks, the crisis is raising important and difficult questions about Japan's role in healing the damage, and its future as a financial leader in a

suspicious and historically hostile region.

Japan is uniquely exposed in South-east Asia, and particularly in Thailand, where the crisis began with the baht's forced devaluation on 2 July.

Roughly half of Thailand's \$80bn of foreign borrowing comes from Japanese banks, who are only just recovering from the collapse of their own property bubble five years ago.

Now, with the baht worth 30 per cent less than two months ago, the repayment of the Thai debts is also called into question.

But Japanese companies have also led the way in setting up offshore manufacturing plants in South-east Asia, bringing valuable skills and technology and benefiting from production costs and young and increasingly affluent consumer markets. In Thailand, for

instance, half of all direct investment is Japanese. But the crunch on consumer spending forced by the baht's devaluation is already affecting sales, especially of Japanese cars.

Both Toyota and Honda have opened new factories in Thailand in the last 18 months. Last week, the president of Toyota admitted that the baht's devaluation could force sales down by nearly one third. Nissan has

closed one of its factories for August, and Japan's biggest life insurer, Nippon Life, quickly sold off half its holdings in Thai securities after the devaluation.

Japan was the largest national donor to the \$1bn rescue package organised for Thailand by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but its \$4bn dollar contribution was already less than expected.

Despite its position as the region's pre-eminent economic power, Japan has failed to address the crisis with the energy shown by the United States in tackling the collapse of the Mexican peso some three years ago.

IN BRIEF

Strong pound unsustainable, says Governor

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said yesterday the current strength of the pound was unsustainable, but there was little the monetary authorities could do about it. He told a conference of central bankers and economists in Wyoming that the Bank had to focus on maintaining long-term price stability and growing the economy until the problem of the strength of sterling resolved itself. There was "no perfect solution", Mr George said, so they would have to hold on until the situation resolved itself. "We've got an exchange rate that is clearly stronger than we think could be sustained in the longer term," he said. His remarks come after the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, on Saturday hailed the "optimistic noises" from the Bank on inflation and interest rates.

SBC rocked by fresh scandal

Swiss Bank Corporation has been rocked by a new scandal after it emerged that a former employee had committed suicide after being sacked from the bank's foreign exchange department in connection with the embezzlement of up to \$2bn (£1.1m). A spokesman said over the weekend: "Five people in Geneva have been fired with immediate effect after we discovered irregularities in our foreign exchange business. Some tried to put money into their own pockets, money that belonged to the bank." He confirmed that one had later died, reportedly found with a pistol at his side. The new revelations come after SBC, owner of London's HSIC Warburg investment bank, was last week fined a record £300,000 for disciplinary breaches and Credit Suisse admitted it had sacked a rogue trader who lost around \$9m (£5.5m) on the options market.

Williams may ditch home improvement

Williams Holdings is reported to be considering disposing of its home improvement business, which includes the Polyfiller and Polycell brands, in order to focus on its core security and fire protection interests. The company was not available for comment yesterday. Analysts said the sale could fetch over £900m, with Imperial Chemicals Industries among the favourite buyers.

Hurn tipped as front-runner for GEC job

The chairman of Smiths Industries, Sir Roger Hurn, has been tipped as the front-runner to replace Lord Prior as the head of GEC, the defence group. Lord Prior retires next year, and an announcement about his successor is not expected until the end of this year. A spokesman for Smiths Industries refused to comment but said that it is thought that a decision on the post is some way off.

Cable & Wireless to use BSkyB

Cable & Wireless Communications, the UK's largest cable company, is understood to have signed a deal with BSkyB to use the satellite broadcaster as its pay-per-view supplier instead of developing its own service. Neither CWC nor Sky would comment but an announcement is expected within weeks. The news coincides with attempts by other cable operators to break Sky's dominance in the market.

Another £25bn in windfall gains could be on the way

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The next five years could bring another £25bn of windfalls for consumers as more building societies and other mutual organisations follow the lead of the Halifax and convert to companies listed on the stock market. A leading City of London investment bank predicts that millions of people will share in this new bonanza, having already picked up a predicted £35bn of free shares in converting institutions by the end of this year.

As well as the Halifax, several well-known building societies including the Woolwich have joined the stock market this year, along with Norwich Union, the life insurance company. About a quarter of the free shares members of former building societies have received so far in 1997 have been sold immediately.

The rush to the stock market has delighted carpetbaggers and fuelled the present consumer boom. But the give-away, expected to add more

Remaining mutual building societies

Estimated payout	2001
Redrow	£7.0
Brentford & Bishop's Stortford	£3.0
British	£1.1
Yorkshire	£0.9
Portman	£0.5
Coventry	£0.4
Shorefield	£0.3
Stamford	£0.3
Edwards	£0.1
Royal London Mutual	£0.0
Scottish Life	£0.0

Source: HSBC Greenwich

Remaining mutual life insurers

Ranked by assets at Dec 31, £bn	2001
Standard Life	42.8
Scottish Widows	22.3
Equitable Life	16.8
Friends Provident	13.7
Co-operative	11.4
National Provident	9.5
Scottish Provident	5.7
Royal London Mutual	5.0
Scottish Life	4.8

Source: HSBC Greenwich

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Indices	Price	Wk Chg	% Change	Falls - Top 3	Price	Wk Chg	% Change
FTSE 100	4817.50	-33.6	-0.7	FTSE 250	5068.60	4056.60	3.43
FTSE 250	4803.40	-55.3	-1.2	4729.40	4386.20	3.61	
FTSE 350	2327.80	-38.0	-1.6	2438.00	2017.90	3.46	
FTSE SmallCap	2243.13	-10.3	-0.5	2374.20	2178.29	3.20	
FTSE All-Share	2278.72	-35.4	-1.5	2378.39	1989.78	3.45	
New York	7522.42	-265.49	-3.37	8250.31	5032.94	1.65	
Tokyo	18229.42	-120.8	-0.2	20681.07	17303.85	0.841	
Hong Kong	14135.25	-1294.5	-8.4	16673.27	12055.17	2.997	
Frankfurt	3806.03	-180.0	-4.4	4438.93	2848.77	1.397	

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES

Money Market Rates	1 Month	1 Year	Bond Yields %	Year Ago	Long Bond %	20 Years Ago



PAMELA MEADOWS

These are the people who have seen industries collapse under them, their specialist skills no longer needed. They are the ones whose homes have been repossessed. They are the people who have lost hope, and whose wives have lost hope.

The large fall in registered unemployment in July surprised many observers. After all, isn't unemployment our greatest economic problem? Wasn't the government elected on a platform of getting the nation back to work? But the Welfare to Work programme has not yet started. What is going on?

Some of it may be the other side of the building society windfall coin. The weekend that the Halifax bonuses were paid out, I happened to visit my local DIY warehouse for a pair of secateurs. Economists, unlike other social scientists, do not often get the opportunity to do real fieldwork, observing people behaving as economic agents; but that day I felt I was watching an economic phenomenon.

The place was teeming with families buying expensive non-essentials. On a typical Saturday I saw people buying wallpaper, paint and a few geraniums. But not that week. It was the gazebos, the wooden designer garden furniture and the £50 shrubs that were being loaded up onto virtually every trolley. Many families needed more than one trolley. Thousands of pounds were passing before my eyes in a way normally only seen in the clothes shops patronised by ladies who lunch.

Economics textbooks tell us that people save windfall gains. My eyes were telling me that they do not. The retail sales figures are telling us that they do not. The latest inflation figures are also telling us that they do

not, and so are the record VAT receipts. We should not therefore be surprised that labour market statistics are telling us the same thing. Real money is being shifted into consumption.

The mechanism happens to be an unusual and one-off one, but the outcome is the same. Those with money are spending it, and those they spend it with need to employ people to help them to do so.

The question I started with probably ought to be turned on its head. We ought not to be asking why unemployment is falling so quickly. Rather, we should be wondering why it remains as high as it is, particularly when we take account of high levels of inactivity (in other words complete withdrawal from the labour force) as well.

One encouraging phenomenon is the rapid fall in unemployment which is taking place among young people. But this produces some of a policy dilemma. The central plank of the Government's unemployment policy is to target its Welfare to Work policy on the under-25s. But they are doing so at a time when the evidence firmly points to the view that the under-25s are not the problem. There are only 200,000 of them left who have been unemployed for over six months. (The Government's election manifesto promised to reduce their number by 250,000.)

The real problem lies with the over-40s. These are the people who have seen industries collapse under them, their specialist

skills, often high level and advanced, no longer needed. They are the ones whose homes have been repossessed. They are the people who have lost hope, and whose wives have lost hope.

For there is a gender dimension to this, often unspoken. Women's fortunes do not have the same trouble getting jobs as men of the same age. They might be rejected by those looking for bright young things, in PR, selling CDs or as senior managers, but they are welcomed by supermarkets, schools, hospitals and other key expanding sectors where the ability to deal with people, stability, maturity and knowing something about life are important characteristics looked for in employees.

The main exceptions to this rule are the wives of unemployed men. We have a benefit system which treats them as dependents, and which knocks their earnings pound for pound off the family benefit entitlement. These middle aged couples are the forgotten unemployed. Their employed counterparts are displaying their sunsets from their recent holidays, accumulating pension rights, watching their children stay on in full-time education in unprecedented numbers, and spending their building society windfalls on new fitted kitchens and garden furniture.

Fifty-year old men who have been unemployed for a year do not make trouble. They do not indulge in anti-social behaviour. They do not make their problems obvious. They do not feel that other groups do. Yet they ought to be the backbone of our social structure. They should be the people who act as role models for younger colleagues and neighbours. They should be helping their own children as they enter adult life and begin to raise families of their own.

This is the group that have drawn in on themselves. They manage their money carefully and survive, quietly and privately at home, grimly continuing to apply for jobs they feel they have little hope of getting. They are a little bewildered by the way the world has changed. They have fallen off the top of the industrial tree and yet have no place in the world of fast food and home help that their wives and children inhabit.

Young unemployed people do need help, but it tends to be of two kinds: in education and social development opportunities to remedy the effects of a school system that has allowed some people to emerge with inadequate basic education and few social skills; and in real careers advice about the nature of work in the modern economy, and what is necessary to get it and keep it.

Young men have lost the desire to be engine drivers, but too many of them still aspire to be motor mechanics at a time when cars have become much more reliable, and where the things that go wrong are usually sophisticated electronics components rather than basic mechanical ones. Perhaps they simply need to fall in love with computers. Young women need to feel, as their

mothers do, that although motherhood is good for self-esteem, work can be too; and although motherhood on your own does not have its rewards, it is also very hard work. But this ought to be done within the mainstream. It does not require employment subsidies. The labour market is clearly showing that employable young people are getting jobs.

What we need in the 1990s is the Phyllisian approach to unemployment. We must fortify the over-forties. A forty-year-old man is only half way through his life. It makes no sense at all to accept that he is never going to work again. If we are going to have job subsidies, this is the group that needs them, and they may need them for some time, not just on a temporary basis.

They have social skills and they have authority. The market may not be willing to employ them at the sort of wages they need to sustain a family, but there remains a need for jobs where they would be welcome. The sort of job where a mature man keeping a friendly eye on things would keep the social wheels better oiled than they are now. Having attendants in car parks rather than just machines; conductors on buses; guards on trains; staff on stations; keepers in parks; that would be real work for them and an improvement in the welfare of all of us.

Pamela Meadows is director of the Policy Studies Institute.

UK set to lose battle on phone competition

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

The Government looks set to lose a long-running battle with the European Commission over the shape of phone competition, in a move that could herald severe turbulence for the UK telecommunications market.

The Department of Trade and Industry is stepping up its lobbying of other European governments over the proposals in a draft EC directive which would harmonise the systems of telephony competition across the EU from 2000. The Commission will finalise the plans, which cover the way customers access rival phone companies in a competitive market, in the next few months.

But it has emerged that the ultimate decision on the directive will be made through qualified majority voting, which means Britain will be forced to sign up to the new system un-

less it can persuade other governments to vote against it.

"We hope to explain that our system would be much more beneficial, but at the end of the day if we lose the vote we will have to implement the EC directive," said a DTI source.

The Commission is urging countries to adopt the "equal access" approach to competition pioneered in the US following the break up of AT&T in 1984. Consumers in America "prefer" a company like AT&T or MCI as their nominated supplier for long distance and international calls. All long distance calls would then be automatically routed to the chosen service provider. The local phone monopolies, the so-called Baby Bells, are only just being opened to competition.

The UK's watchdog, Ofcom, took a different route to competition, developing a system known as "indirect access". British Telecom customers can

access any number of different long distance companies, including Mercury and Energis, but only by dialling a special three-number code before each call.

The seemingly arcane difference between the two systems hides a complete gulf between the UK and US approaches to competition. Ofcom has long argued that the UK system encouraged new companies like the cable operators to spend billions of pounds building rival local networks to BT's.

Since full competition arrived in the UK in 1991, the cable companies, and more recently concerned that their carefully crafted investment assumptions could be overtaken. The industry has already been hit both by intense competition from BT and disappointing subscriber numbers and could now see share prices and borrowing forecasts disrupted again.

Yet long-distance networks such as Energis and AT&T, which is growing its UK base

into force, the cable companies are becoming more and more concerned that their carefully crafted investment assumptions could be overtaken. The industry has already been hit both by intense competition from BT and disappointing subscriber numbers and could now see share prices and borrowing forecasts disrupted again.

Substantially, would derive huge benefits as more and more BT customers switched their long-distance business. BT, according to analysts, would also benefit because its base in the local market would be more secure.

The stakes were raised further when the US watchdog, the Federal Communications Commission, made its approval of BT's £1.1bn merger with MCI conditional on the UK adopting the directive.



Telecoms minister Barbara Roche: Stepping up lobbying

Suits you, Sir. Double vent for the banker's bottom

Cathy Newman

Big-bottomed bankers are wearing double-breasted jackets to accommodate their bulging posteriors, while lawyers favour single vents to emphasise their swish profiles, according to a new survey from the tailor Norton & Townsend.

The business lunch can be blamed for a growing number of bankers wishing to cover up their "larger bottoms" by wearing jackets with double vents, the survey found. Sixty-one per cent of bankers questioned said they preferred double vents.

Lawyers, on the other hand, appear to have cut down on waistlines by picking pinstripes. An overwhelming majority—81 per cent of stockbrokers wore turn-ups and double-breasted suits, as "one way of showing self-confidence", Mr Norton said.

Publishers were, surprisingly, less flamboyant. Seventy per cent of those approached wore single-breasted suits, and 50 per cent chose "sombre grey linings".

Grey was also the colour of choice for the accountant. But Mr Norton said there were signs accountants were trying to break free of their staid image by wearing more outgoing designs. Seventy per cent sported double-breasted suits with pin or rope stripes.

Accountants may have been inspired by New Labour's penchant for double-breasted suits. Mr Norton suggested, "If you look at New Labour, double-breasted suits have been recommended by the spin doctors."

Norton & Townsend, a visiting tailor which specialises in made-to-measure suits, surveyed 200 people working in central London. The company was, however, unable to draw any conclusions about what women wear at work.

Mr Norton explained: "Women are much more fussy in terms of cut. There aren't any visiting tailors which cater for women, as it's a difficult market."

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